

The Female Coach as a Role Model for Personal Growth and Development to the Female Adolescent Athlete

by

Tammy Campbell

**Faculty of Applied Health Sciences
Brock University**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree Master of Arts

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Running head: THE FEMALE COACH AS A ROLE MODEL

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For my husband Kirk and my son Matthew,
who have made this journey possible.

For Sandra Seaman who always said that anything is possible.

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Abstract

Research interest on the topic of female coaches as role models has recently emerged in the coaching literature. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1963; 1977; 1986) has also emerged as an essential framework in explaining learning through modeling. Previous research has examined the coach as a role model, as well as gender differences between coaches. Several authors, with several different conclusions, have studied the significance of gender as an influencer in role modeling. Whitaker and Molstad in 1988 conducted a study focusing on the coach as a role model. What they found was when they combined the results of high school and college aged athletes; the female coach was considered to be a superior role model. The current research used a social learning theory framework to examine the benefits and intricacies of the modeling relationship between female adolescent athletes and influential female coaches. To accomplish this task, the formative experiences of thirteen adolescent female athletes were examined. Each athlete was interviewed, with each semi-structured interview focusing on extracting the salient features of a coach that the athlete identified as being the most influential in her personal development. The data from these interviews were qualitatively analyzed using case studies. From case studies, a template emerges in which the coach/athlete relationship can be seen as an essential construct in which caring and strong role models can have lasting effects on the lives, values, and successes of adolescent female athletes.

Chapter 1

Introduction

A major area of interest within psychology has been the study of formative relationships, and how these relationships impact a positive feeling of self worth in children and adolescents. Children who have experienced positive and supportive relationships have the necessary tools to develop future meaningful relationships and develop a healthy independence from their parents.

As children move into adolescence they begin to explore a greater sense of independence from their parents. They seek out individuals with traits they consider to be positive. Previous research has focused on teachers, peers and members of society, specifically those highlighted by the media as potential mentors or role models (Bandura, 1977; Bergem, 1990; Danziger, 1970; Edwards, 1994; Harwood, 2001; Haycock, 2002; Lines, 2001; Richardson, 2002). These role models can influence personal growth and the development of self. They can also be instrumental in the development of social, academic and life skills essential to leading a healthy productive life as an adult. A role model may be defined as “one viewed so positively that the socializee strives to be like him, thus, someone who has a significant effect on the socialization of the individual. There are both general role models (I admire everything he does and want to be just like him) and specific role models (I want to learn how he hits his back hand)” (Campbell, 1975, p.76). Role models are known to positively increase an individual’s sense of self through competence, self-confidence, self-esteem, self-image, self-concept and self-worth. Within the sport context, a coach may play

such a role. Given the fact that in some cases an athlete can spend upwards of 20 hours a week with their coach, the possibility of developing a significant relationship with the athlete is quite profound. This relationship may, in fact, enhance personal growth and development.

An intriguing question that then follows from this coach-athlete relationship asks about the nature of this influence. Specifically, what kind of bond develops between adolescent female athlete and her female coach? How does this type of relationship help to facilitate the personal growth and development of the athlete? What occurs in these relationships that enhance self-confidence and self-esteem and how do these relationships aid in psychological growth? Developing a special sense of wholeness is experienced through such important relationships. While psychological variables such as self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-worth are extremely important and will be addressed in this study, the construct of emotional wholeness aptly captures the essential benefits derived from these important relationships. Social learning theorists (Bandura, 1977; 1986; Bandura & Walters, 1963) suggest that most human behaviour is learned observationally through modeling. This belief has been used extensively when examining child-parent and student teacher relationships as significant learning opportunities. A number of researchers have examined the importance of significant others in the sport socialization process (Greendorfer, 1977; Kenyon & McPherson, 1981) but very few have examined the female athlete/ female coach relationship.

Examining the athlete/coach relationship from a social learning perspective provides a solid foundation on which to understand how adolescents

learn and model. It also provides a means with which to explore the psychological benefits of this unique relationship. Through an examination of this relationship from a social learning perspective, one may begin to uncover the complexities of this relationship and come to a more accurate understanding of the importance of this relationship in the development of female athletes.

The purpose of this study was to examine the salient features that may characterize the relationship between the female coach as a positive role model and the female athlete with respect to personal growth and development. In order to lay the groundwork for this project, this investigation will first examine social learning theory. According to Bandura (1977),

“In social learning, people are neither driven by inner forces nor buffeted by environmental stimuli. Rather, psychological functioning is explained in terms of a continuous reciprocal interaction of personal and environmental determinants. Within this approach, symbolic, vicarious, and self-regulatory processes assume a prominent role” (p.11-12).

This theoretical framework is applied to the coach-athlete relationship, and the way in which it pertains to role modeling and psychological growth and development. The influence of role modeling via moral judgments, values and expectations has been examined. Building upon previous research in the area of the female coach/ female athlete relationship, this study investigates, in greater detail, the psychological and motivational factors that shape athletes perceptions of positive coach role-modeling behaviour. In order to investigate the complexity of this relationship, thirteen interviews with female adolescent athletes are

analyzed, focusing on each athlete's positive experience with an individual female coach. In the final chapter these interviews are synthesized and reoccurring themes are discussed.

Social Learning Theory

In relation to human behaviour, social learning theory argues that people are not born with an innate repertoire of behaviour; rather, they must learn them. New behaviours and responses are learned by either direct experience or observation. In the most basic mode of learning rooted in direct experience, the positive and negative outcomes that actions produce will either reinforce behaviour or cause this behaviour to be rejected. An individual will keep the outcomes that they favour and discard the outcomes that they do not. This process results in the individual's behaviour repertoire. This process is known as differential reinforcement. Learning in this way is considered a mechanistic process in which responses are automatic and unconscious and directly affected by any immediate consequence.

A less straightforward and mechanistic way of learning proposed by social learning theorists (Bandura & Walters, 1963; Brophy, 1977) is learning through modeling. According to social learning theory, modeling will influence learning through informative function. This mimicked behaviour is also known as observational learning. Observational learning follows four stages. During the first stage, Attentional Process-an individual must focus on and accurately identify the salient features of the model's behaviour. The people an individual will be exposed to (be it by choice or imposition); will determine the type of behaviour

that is learned. Within any group some individuals will command more attention than others and therefore their behaviour is more likely to be modeled. A learner will place values on all behaviours making some more favorable than others. Models possessing more favourable behaviours will be sought out while those whose behaviour is seen as less favourable will be disregarded.

The next stage involves the Retention Process. Once an individual has attended to behaviour they must then retain and recall it for future reference. When a model is no longer around to provide an example and direction to the learner, the learner needs to be able to recall how to behave like the model. This will be accomplished within memory through symbolic representations, following repeated exposure to behaviour. The learner, who will choose a known symbol to understand and be able to access easily the memory of behaviour, creates these symbolic references. During this process, retrievable symbolic references are produced. Symbolic references are used as these codes carry a great deal of information in an easily stored form. For example, a child will imitate a model immediately, and directly follow the model's behaviour. As the individual moves into adolescence, however, their responses will be performed without the model present. This can occur long after the behaviour has been observed.

During the Motor Reproduction stage, the individual takes the symbolic representations and turns them into appropriate actions. An individual will need to possess the skills necessary to perform the behaviour exactly. Without these necessary skills the behavioural reproductions will have errors. Most errors may be remedied through practice and refinement of the behaviour.

During the fourth stage, the Motivational Process, an individual will not perform all the behaviour that they have learned. According to social learning theory there is a marked difference between acquisition and performance. A learner is more likely to perform behaviour if they know it will result in outcomes they value. When a child has performed a learned behaviour they will be strongly influenced by how the model responds to the behaviour. Young children imitate accurately when they have incentives to do so, however, their imitation will deteriorate rapidly if others do not care how they behave.

In this schema, modeling cannot occur without the presence of social engagement or socialization. According to Bandura and Walters (1963), "the socialization process is the acquisition of social behaviours in response to the learner's environment" (p.47). An individual will learn how to behave in different situations based on what they experience through their environment. The strongest influence on behaviour during socialization will be other individuals. Socialization is "the general process by which the human actor acquires the skills and values that enable him to function as a member of a social system" (Campbell, 1975 p.78). It is important to note that socialization will occur in both purposeful and incidental learning environments. The other individuals referred to will be known as models. Most human behaviour is learned observationally through modeling (Bandura & Walters 1963). When this modeling occurs the observer notices the model's behaviour in the original situation and this behaviour later influences the observer's behaviour in a generic sense in similar situations. Under comparable circumstances the learner will then mimic the

behaviour learned from the model (Bandura & Walters, 1963; Brophy, 1977).

These models include agents known as “role models”, who influence the learner’s behaviour simply by way of the learner’s exposure to the model. Role models can appear in the learner’s life as parents, peers and other adults. The current research is specifically interested in other adults and more specifically female coaches.

Individuals are more likely to be intrigued by or seek out those models that present behaviour that is considered positive by the learner. “Models who possess engaging qualities are sought out, while those lacking pleasing characteristics are generally ignored or rejected” (Bandura, 1977 p.24). This is done automatically as individuals immediately seek positive characteristics or characteristics that they feel they will benefit from in some way. This will vary from individual to individual. The motivation level of the learner will increase the more they feel the behaviour will illicit positive outcomes. Learners will not only model specific behaviours but also more generalized patterns of conduct, modes of thinking and moral judgment and the values and expectations associated with the various behaviours that have been found to be transmitted via modeling. Modeling can be conveyed through words or life actions.

Several researchers have used social learning theory to explain how sport socialization occurs (Greendorfer, 1977; Kelly, 1970; Kenyon, 1966; 1970). The primary focus of these studies and the current study as it pertains to socialization is the use of socializing agents or role models. Role models substantially influence the outcome of the socialization process because of their prestige and

power to provide love, rewards, and punishments. They also have the mechanisms for instilling and confirming certain values, behaviour and sanctions. As stated earlier various agents can play a role in the socialization process, and more specifically in the sport socialization process. Pudelskiwicz (1970) found that the first stimulus for a child to become involved in sport is usually received from sport-involved peers. This stimulus is even stronger when parents consider sport to be an important way of life. Snyder and Spreitzer (1973), using social learning theory as a foundation, found that parents who share the same gender as their children had greater influence on children's involvement in sport than opposite sex parents. This finding suggests that female athletes may be more influenced by their female peers, female siblings and female coaches. The literature on social learning theory also supports the disposition that positive effects of modeling are more likely to be seen when the person being modeled and the person modeling are of the same gender (Bandura & Walters, 1963). As Whitaker and Molstad (1985) suggest,

“Especially in the case of the female athlete, the presence of female role models provides motivation to enter and to continue participation, assurance of the gender appropriateness of participation, the outlook that success is possible as well as desirable, and guidance on the routes of success.”(Whitaker & Molstad, 1985, p17)

Thus, social learning theory provides a logical theoretical rationale for the objectives of this research project. Although modeling has, to this point, been presented as a one-way relationship, this process is very much dependent upon

a two-way interaction. As such, this study will adopt a research method that will accommodate data collection that acknowledges the two-way relational nature of the coach-athlete interaction.

Adolescence

Adolescence has been defined as the period between the ages of 12-18. During this time period logical and abstract thought increases, as does a concern about identity and independence (Gabbard, 1992). In an attempt to find their identity and independence an individual will begin to reject and pull away from those things familiar, especially parents. This desire for independence can be quite intense in some individuals.

Erik Erikson found that personality developed in stages and was intrigued by the adolescent stage in particular. During this stage he found that the individual seeks to find a place in the adult world. In doing so they look for roles that are compatible with the identity they are attempting to develop (Carver & Scheier, 1992). In the adolescent's short life their parents have been the most influential role models. Parents provide the first example of how to be a positive addition to society. During the adolescent stage, a child begins to move away from their parents as primary role models and seeks other possible role models in the adult world. Steinberg and Silverberg (1992) also felt that during the transition from childhood to adolescence an individual would become more independent from their parents as they form a stronger sense of who they are. They will still require someone to emulate, but they feel this process must now be done on their own. It is therefore imperative that there are responsible positive

role models available in this often awkward and confusing phase of life. Coaches especially for a provincial or national level athlete will take the place of the parents naturally. The amount of time spent with an individual will have a significant impact on modeling as social learning theory earlier suggested.

Erikson's theories are supported by a number of other psychologists including Peter Blos. Like Erikson, Blos (1962) studied adolescence. He categorized adolescence into four stages, preadolescence, adolescence proper, late-adolescence, and post-adolescence. His theory was based on the individual's struggle to understand and move away from the attachment to their parents, subsequently forming a stronger sense of self. These stages are not age specific as Blos theorized that all individuals would enter and develop through each stage differently. During preadolescence individuals will push their parents away as primary attachments and seek the same attachment with others. Blos pointed out that implicit in this passage is the adolescent's realization of their need to develop new values. The individual will develop these new values based on the information they receive from others in their environment. They also begin to develop new ways of thinking and understanding the world around them. Blos's work is important for this particular paper as Blos was interested in how the adolescent developed new values from individuals other than their parents. An athlete will spend a significant amount of time with a coach. This thesis is interested in the values passed on from the coach to the adolescent. During late adolescence there is a marked shift from dependence to independence. The

individual has a stronger sense of self through working with and testing their abilities.

Role Model

The term role model in the literature is interchanged with mentor, teacher, leader and hero. This leads to variation in the definition of what a role model is. Perrone, Zanardelli, Worthington, and Chartrand (2002) felt that the choice of role model includes such factors as similarity (e.g., same gender) and positive attributes of the model. Individuals are likely to benefit from a supportive, positive role model relationship. This variation can be seen in earlier research as well. Social learning, as was earlier reviewed, stated that children imitate same-sex models more than opposite sex ones due to such factors as differential reinforcement, greater attentiveness, and perceived similarity to the model. Almquist and Angrist (1971) made the interesting point that role models sometimes go beyond providing simple technical how-to information and assume some qualities attributed to reference groups setting norms and values, providing recognition and reward for achievements, and orienting behaviours on a certain course. Bell (1970) points out that there are two processes involved in rolemodelship: interaction and identification. Interaction includes behaviour between the individual and the role model, and can occur at different points in life (e.g., education, personal, career). Identification with the role model by the individual can involve a perception of similarity between self and the role model, imitation of the role model, and assimilation of the model's attitudes and values.

As noted earlier, the choice of role model involves factors such as similarity and positive attributes of the model. To further add to this, Anderson (1995) found that the majority of participants preferred same-gender role models. Mere exposure to role models is not always sufficient. Anderson also noted that first the individual must identify with a role model, and second, individuals must seek to build a high quality relationship with the role model. Role model supportiveness and relationship qualities are key characteristics of role model influence on career factors (Nauta, Epperson, & Kahn, 1998).

In the present study a role model is defined as an individual that others emulate and aspire to become. Their life and activities influence another individual in specific life decisions. They can be admired based on a number of different attributes including behaviour, beliefs, knowledge, career, morals, attitudes and values.

Coach as a Role Model

The coach/athlete relationship has received a lot of attention within the literature. This section will review the various positive attributes this unique relationship has to offer.

The athlete must feel support and acceptance from the coach in order for autonomy and identification with the model to occur. Over the past twenty years Smith and Smoll have done a lot of research on the characteristics of coaching behaviours that affect performance and the psychological growth of athletes. In their review of interventions in youth sports, Smith and Smoll, (1991) stated

“coaches occupy a position of centrality in the athletic setting this influence can extend into other areas of children’s lives as well” (p. 29).

Support, concern, and care are attributes of successful coaching. The good coach fosters an environment that allows the athlete to experience physical and personal development (Sarason, Sarason & Pierce, 1990). The positive attributes that a coach can bring to the relationship can affect an athlete’s performance both on and off the field (Duda, 1989; Duda & Treasure, 2001; Luke, 1998). Social learning theory can be applied to this unique relationship. Young athletes will try and imitate their coaches. This imitation and modeling can happen without either the coach or athlete realizing that this is taking place. Coaches not only affect how the athletes perform they can have an impact on how the athlete behaves and, consequently, perceived as an individual in society. The close relationship that can develop between the two provides the coach with an opportunity to pass on social, emotional, moral and character building attributes (Moore, 1970; Nakamura, 1996; Sabock, 1979; Vernacchia, McGuire, & Cook, 1992).

There appears to be a huge responsibility placed on the coach to provide a positive role model. Nakamura (1996) felt that the coaches should be aware of this unwritten responsibility and conduct themselves in a manner that is positive.

“Young athletes will imitate. They reflect how the coach thinks, how the coach communicates, what the coach values how the coach solves problems, what the coach does with feelings, how the coach cares, and how the coach is in the world. Whether coaches know it or

not they are teaching and modeling self-esteem or lack of it to their players all the time" (p. 10).

The phenomenon that occurs in a positive, close relationship will also have an impact on the coach. The ability to be a positive influence in the life of a child can be extremely rewarding to the coach.

"The ultimate in satisfaction, for a coach who cares, occurs years after an athlete has left high school and has become successful in whatever field he or she has chosen to pursue. Long after the games have been played, this is what really counts. This is the time that a coach is permitted the luxury of thinking that the experiences this individual has as a member of a particular team might have helped this person to become what he or she is, as an adult and a citizen of the community" (Sabock, 1979, p.120)

In summary, the social learning theory literature provides a solid framework from which to examine the issues of gender, coaching and positive role models. Research in coaching and gender suggests a strong linkage between the influence of same-sex coaches and athletes, and underscores the importance of further research on this relationship with the adolescent population. Finally, the question of what constitutes a 'good coach' and a 'good role-model' for healthy female adolescent growth and development remains a critical question for analysis.

Gender and Coaching

There has been a debate rising within the coaching literature as to whether a male or female coach is better for the female athlete (Whitaker & Molstad, 1987; Williams & Parkhouse, 1988). More specifically there has been an ongoing debate in the literature as to the significance of gender as an influencer in role modeling. Douvan (1976) and Moriearty and Robbin-Carter (1985) suggested that the value of same sex role models is more belief than a fact, and its importance has been overestimated. Researchers (Balswick & Ingoldsby, 1987; Bussey & Perry, 1982; Greendorfer, 1977; Speizer, 1981; Weiss & Knoppers, 1980; Whitaker & Molstad, 1988), both within and outside the athletic environment, have concluded that either sex role models are effective or that there is no perceived difference on the part of the athlete with regard to the sex of the coach as a role model. With respect to the influence of female role models within the academic environment, other researchers (Basow, 1984; Seater & Ridgeway, 1976; Tidball, 1973; 1974) all concluded that female faculty were strong role models for their female students. This research is important to the current research as it ties female faculty to female students, thus providing support for the female coach and female athlete relationship.

Research in the field of gender and coaching must also be cognizant of important issues related to the social construction of gender. Notably, assumptions about gender 'difference' may lead to false generalizations, and thereby contribute to research bias. As Caplan and Caplan (1999) note, "Scientists who study sex and gender grew up learning what women and men are

“supposed” to be like.” (p. 3). Caplan and Caplan also point out two dangerous assumptions. The assumption that if we find a “sex difference” in some ability or kind of behaviour, that means that all males do a particular thing and all females do something quite different. There is also the assumption that sex differences are biologically based and, therefore, inevitable and unchangeable. To move past perceptions and biases, researchers in this area must keep in mind these possible assumptions while in the process of their research.

Given the broad context of research on gender and coaching, three critical issues are relevant for the purposes of this study. These issues include research on coaching competence, research on coaching personality, and research on coaching leadership style.

While examining coaches and their level of confidence within their position two important findings were revealed. First perceived competence is a salient contribution to coaches’ motivation levels particularly for female coaches (Sisley, Weiss, Barber, & Ebbeck, 1990; Weiss & Sisley, 1984; Weiss & Stevens, 1993). Secondly a significant difference was discovered in perceived competence between male and female coaches. Combined with a significant decrease in the number of female coaches’ researchers (Barber, 1998, Lovett & Lowry 1991, Molstad, 1993) were intrigued to separately examine the difference in coaching competence of males and females.

In an American study of U.S. coaches Barber (1998) examined gender differences and sources of competence for men and women interscholastic coaches. She felt that more research in this area had been motivated by “a

desire to understand the declining percentage of women coaches over the past 20 years" (1998, pg. 237). Female coaches may be more affected by their perceived level of competence. Barber hypothesized that competence is critical to motivation and perceived competence for coaching settings is significantly lower in women coaches than it is in male coaches. She also found that men have many more sources available to them, to encourage a higher self-competence than women do. "This provides them with internally and externally based information sources for enhancing their self-perceptions" (Barber, 1998, p. 249).

An interesting finding that Barber had was that the female coaches in her study were better trained, possessed similar win/loss records, and had in fact equal competence perceptions in all aspects of coaching. In her Book, *You Just Don't Understand: Men and Women in Conversation*, Deborah Tannen writes, "that because women tend to verbally downplay their expertise what may look like lack of confidence on the part of women is a reluctance to appear boastful". (2001, p. 17). She also claims that women are more likely to downplay their certainty while men are more likely to minimize their doubts.

The female coach may look to many sources for support while trying to improve her level of competence. One very important source could be her athletes. The relationship between coach and athlete can be quite important. Not only is it important in the development of the athlete but for the coach as well. The self-perceptions a coach holds can be significantly influenced by the perceptions of her athletes (Williams & Parkhouse, 1988). The coach athlete

relationship in this context is considered to be a very dynamic two-way interaction, with the coach also benefiting from this connection.

The research in competence can be quite conflicting when studying gender. Women have struggled more with competence than men; however it seems that men have had more support in improving their competence levels. It is certain that the competence of a coach is affected by many different sources.

A second area of relevant coaching research examined coaching personality. Within personality and coaching research common themes emerge. Athletes of both genders prefer a coach who emits positive attributes while in the coaching role. This is significant, as an athlete will remember a coach's personality and the qualities that they appreciated and perceived as positive. In a study conducted on whether or not girls and boys should be coached in the same way, Stewart (2000) found, the specific behaviours that were interpreted as being related to a coach's personality were assertive, cooperative, determined, respected (respectable), willing to help, dedicated, a quality person, great personality, cool under pressure, responsible, liked coaching, a role model, energetic, and wanted to be there. He also found that athletes relate more to a positive personality in a coach. The positive category personality received the most references by both genders (males = 27.8% and females = 19.6%).

A third important theme that emerges in the coaching literature relates to coaching style. The research indicates that male coaches are more interested in winning whereas female coaches are more interested in the broader context and what the athletes take from their experiences in sport. "There was a tendency to

emphasize winning with males and doing one's best with females" (Tuffey, 1998, p. 4). Pinkston (1983) found that there were significant differences in personality traits between male and female coaches and the males desire to win. He also found that there were not only differences between genders, but there were significant personality differences between winning and losing coaches and experienced and less experienced coaches.

Leadership styles can sometimes encompass the previous two areas, but also focuses on authoritative and democratic styles of coaching. Authoritative style coaching involves those characteristics that are more general technical and strict instruction, such as keeping control. This style of coach is focused more on the athlete and their involvement in sport. A democratic style of coaching has characteristics that are encouraging and focus more on the athlete as a person. Research conducted in this area has found that the male athlete prefers an authoritative style of coach while the female athlete prefers a democratic style of coach (Lindauer, 2000; Millard, 1993; Tomlinson & Yorganci, 1997).

From a combination of these three areas many coaching qualities arise. It has already been established that the positive qualities a coach may possess are very important to an athlete. Building on this, Whitaker and Molstad conducted a study in 1987 to determine what specific qualities were important to the female athlete. The six qualities that were identified by the athletes in order of importance were: relates well to athletes, is a strong leader, understands athletes' feelings, produces winners, is a good role model, and brings recognition to the team. They found that female coaches were perceived as being superior

on “relates well to athletes”, “understands athletes’ feelings”, and “is a good role model”. Males, on the other hand, were perceived to be superior on “produces winners”. Within the literature on winning percentage there has been no difference found between the actual winning percentages of male and female coaches (Barber, 1998; Tuffey, 1998; Whitaker & Molstad, 1987; Williams & Parkhouse, 1988).

Chapter 2

Literature on Female Coaches as Role Models

This chapter examines, in greater detail, a number of specific research initiatives relevant to gender and the coach-athlete relationship. These studies were selected by virtue of their contribution toward refining the research question for this study and providing helpful and relevant research design examples.

The Gender Debate Continued

One of the most critical issues that frame the gender debate in the sport literature stems from the deep concern that not enough women have entered the sport context in order to serve as positive role models for female athletes. When explaining the hiring process for women's sport team at a college in the U.S. one administrator commented, "We may lean toward the female coach in order to give the athletes a role model to look up to" (Demerchant, 1995 p.8). Why is it so imperative for this relationship to be available? The impact that the female coach can have on the female athlete can be quite impressive. "Athletics is such an intense part of an athlete's life that when role models appear in context, they can have quite a positive effect" (Suggs, 2000, p.1). In some cases this effect can be quite significant. Some girls will develop a relationship with their coach that can be so significant that it will supplement or even replace the relationship they have with a parent. "Often the coach's influence is even greater than that of the parent" (Neal & Tutko, 1975, p.143). Without the positive female role model, women and young girls will have to rely on male coaches. A male coach can have a positive effect on a female athlete in terms of athletic skill and personal support, however;

the presence of women in roles of authority demonstrates to younger women that these roles are available for them as well. The athletes should be provided with the opportunity to see women in positions of authority, such as a head coach or as an administrator.

“Dr. D. Potter says ‘there is no real method of judging the effects a male coach may have on the personality of the female athlete. The female definitely needs a role model, both at the high school and college level. They need to see competent women in coaching and administrative positions. Seeing men in these roles has a negative effect, implying that women can’t handle the job’ (Kleinfelter & Sabock, 1987, p.28).

Women cannot help but feel threatened and unequal when placed in this situation. “Dr. P. Santalini when talking about men in a coaching role claims that ‘Those girls with male coaches find their feelings of second class citizenship reinforced, that is the idea that they need a man to guide them’” (Kleinfelter & Sabock, 1987, p.29). Female athletes may be drawn to a male coach reflecting the historic cultural roles of men in authority positions. However, continually having men in coaching and administrative positions perpetuates the stereotype (Brown, 1981; Osborne, 2002; Sabock, 1991; Sabock & Kleinfelter, 1987). There is some indication of the importance of the female coach within the literature, “Many hold the view that girls teams should be coached by women. This view is based on a variety of reasons, with role modeling ranking at or near the top” (Sabock & Kleinfelter, 1987 p. 28). “In the case of the female athlete, the presence of female role models provides motivation to enter and to continue

participation, assurance of the gender appropriateness of participation, the outlook that success is possible as well as desirable, and guidance on the routes to success” (Molstad & Whitaker, 1985 p.17). The evidence suggests that it is important for women to enter positions of leadership and authority in order for them to influence the next generation of young female participants. It also suggests that girls and women can participate and be successful in sport.

Positive Coach-Athlete Relationships

In his thesis, Richard Ginsburg (1998) used an object relations model to examine the benefits of the relationship between athletes and positive influential coaches. He interviewed five men extracting their formative experiences with an identified coach. The study focused on two main questions: First, in what ways can an athlete’s relationship with his coach compensate for deficits resulting from parental inadequacies or empathic failures? The second question he was interested in was in what ways can an athlete’s emotional bond with his coach enhances his self-esteem and facilitates his transition from adolescence to adulthood? The latter is very important to the current research, as this research attempts to uncover the salient features of the female coach as a role model.

Ginsburg interviewed not only the athletes but also the coach designated by each athlete as the most influential in the athlete’s personal growth and development. Following analysis of the ten interviews seven themes emerged: First, the coach/player relationship as a good fit for the athlete, given his circumstances and psychological needs. The second theme was the coach/player relationship as reparative of the player’s early childhood deficits. He

next found that, the coach/player relationship provided an opportunity to help the player to modulate his aggression. The fourth theme to emerge was the coach/player relationship as a facilitation of the player's experience of separation-individualization. Ginsburg next found that the coach/player relationship acts as a medium for identification with an important adult male role model. The sixth theme was the coach/player relationship as a means to enhance the player's achievement. The final theme to emerge was the coach/player relationship is a context in which limits are set on the player's behaviour. Ginsburg concluded that coach/player relationship can be seen as a therapeutic construct in which caring and strong role models can have lasting effects on the lives, values, and successes of young men. This concept should be transferable to young women and female coaches. As was earlier stated by social learning theory the benefits of positive role models will be more significant when the model and the learner are the same gender.

Perceptions of Female Basketball Players Regarding Coaching Qualities of Males and Females

In 1987 Molstad and Whitaker sought to find out what coaching qualities female athletes perceive as the most important to their sport experience as a whole. They were encouraged to explore this question based on their findings in 1985 that the sport environment varies considerably for the female athlete depending on whether she is coached by a man or woman. They felt that even more important were the perceived differences athletes had of coaches.

The purpose of their study was to test a model predicting that an athlete's sport experience may vary depending on the gender of their coach. One hundred and sixty five female basketball players from high school, and college answered a 30-item questionnaire. In the questionnaire the athletes were asked to rank order 6 coaching qualities: relating to athletes; strong leadership; understanding athletes' feelings; ability to produce winners; role modeling and; ability to bring recognition to the team. They hypothesized the female athlete would value each quality differently and separately when in the presence of a female coach than with a male coach. More specifically they felt that the athletes would perceive the female coaches to be superior in role modeling, understanding athletes' feelings and relating well to athletes.

After asking twelve specific questions, Molstad and Whitaker (1987) found that the athletes felt there were no gender differences on four of the six qualities: strong leadership; ability to produce winners; ability to bring recognition to the team; and role modeling. They also found support in their hypothesis of perceived female superiority in two of the six qualities: relates well to athletes and understands athlete's feelings. These two qualities ranked one and three in importance to the athletes. It is important to note that the athletes had a clear preference for female coaches when it comes to issues other than sport such as understanding their feelings and relating well to them. What is evident with the results of this study is that female athletes value female coaches when it comes to issues and values related to personal growth and development and that the female coach is essential for these skills. Whitaker and Molstad (1987) concluded

by saying “specifically, these findings indicate that female athletes place a particularly high value on a coach’s ability to interact sensitively and empathetically with athletes on a personal level. Furthermore, by their assessment female coaches are the more highly accomplished at such interaction” (p. 69).

Coaching Qualities, Gender, and Role Modeling

Concerned with the declining numbers of female coaches and the discovery that 70% of all female basketball teams were coached by men, Susan Molstad (1993) conducted a study to find out what perceptions coaches had regarding coaching qualities, gender, and role modeling. She presented 121 male and 135 female high school basketball coaches with three forced-choice questions related to gender and role modeling. She asked the coaches: a) whether they preferred coaching male or female athletes, b) which gender they thought female athletes preferred and, c) how they perceived themselves as a role model compared to coaches of the opposite gender. Molstad also asked the coaches to rank, in order the importance, six top coaching qualities from their perspective. Following this she asked them for the order they thought the athletes would rank the same qualities. The qualities fell into two categories instrumental (produces winners, is a strong leader, and bring recognition to the team) or expressive (relates well to athletes, understands feelings of athletes, is a good role model).

When asked if they would prefer to coach males or females, the coaches overwhelmingly answered females with 91% of female coaches and 71% of male

coaches saying they preferred coaching female athletes. There was a significant difference with question two. When asked do female athletes in general prefer a male coach, female coach or have no preference, female coaches said a female coach 63% of the time, a male coach 6%, and no preference 31%. Male coaches on the other hand said a female coach 6%, a male coach 34%, and no preference 60% of the time. For the final question as a role model for your basketball players, do you think you are a better model equal to, or not as good a model as a coach of the opposite sex? The female coaches said that 61% of the time they were a superior role model, 38% thought they were equal to the males, and 1% thought they were not as good as a male model. The male coaches said the 30% of the time they were better models, 67% of the time they were equal, and 3% of the time they were not as good as the female model.

When reviewing the rankings of the coaching qualities by the coaches, the female coaches significantly rated “relates well to athletes” as the least important quality, while male coaches listed it as first. The same significant difference was found with the quality is a good role model. The male coaches put this one last and the female coaches rated it as the most important quality. Overall the female coaches rated more expressive qualities near the top and the male coaches rated more instrumental qualities near the top.

Molstad (1993) concluded that more research needs to be conducted to understand the relationship between role modeling and gender and the diminishing number of women in coaching and sport leadership positions. She also questioned if female athletes are being socialized to be like male coaches

because of the number of males coaching young female athletes. Molstad wondered if the success of the coach influences their viability and credibility as a role model.

High School and College Coaches as Role Models to Female Athletes

In a desire to highlight the declining number of female coaches within athletics and examine the role modeling patterns of collegiate varsity female basketball players, Lovett and Lowry (1991) surveyed 212 Division 1 varsity women basketball players from 26 teams across the United States. They asked four questions; first of all “did a significant number of coaches serve as role models for varsity women basketball players?” The second question was “of the coaches who served as role model which was the predominant sex?” Thirdly “did a significant number of varsity women basketball players select coaching as a career?” The final question was “of the varsity women basketball players who selected coaching as a career did they have significantly more male or female coaches?” (p.6)

There were significantly more male coaches selected as role models in high school, while in college the female coaches were selected more often as role models (Lovett & Lowry, 1991). However when the two were combined a greater number of coaches who were chosen as role models were women. The authors noted that a greater number of colleges in the sample with female head coaches returned the surveys, which may have biased the results. Lovett and Lowry concluded that coaches do serve as excellent role models for players to emulate, and that both male and female coaches were identified by players as

role models. They felt that the same sex coach appears to be more important when choosing a role model. It was also important for Lovett and Lowry to suggest that an individual's potential as a good role model is used in the selection process of coaches. They felt it was essential for the athletes to see strong and positive women in these positions.

Role Modeling and Female Athletes

Using social learning theory as a theoretical framework, Whitaker and Molstad (1988) sought to examine the role-modeling patterns of female athletes. They surveyed 94 high school and 71 college basketball players. The survey consisted of a 30 item instrument with open ended and forced-choice items which probed subjects' perceptions regarding: a) other players as role models; b) coaches as role models; and, c) preferred gender of coach.

The high school athletes tended to choose another female player when asked which basketball player they most wanted to be like. The college athletes however had a significant preference for a male athletic role model. It is important to note that 54% of the college athletes named no other player as a role model, whereas only 6% of the high school athletes named no other player, leading Whitaker and Molstad to believe that having a role model was more important to the younger high school athletes. When the athletes were asked, "Who is the better role model, a female, male coach, or no difference?" 57% of the high school athletes and 37% of the college athletes perceived a gender difference. High school athletes perceived a significant superiority of female coaches as role models. College athletes had no such significant result. However, when

combined there was a significant superiority of female coaches as role models. When asked, "Who is a better example of what you want to be?" 52% of all athletes perceived a difference. The high school athletes indicated a superiority of female coaches, whereas the college athletes showed a significant choice of male coaches. Again when combined there was a significant superiority of female coaches as examples of what they wanted to be.

With regards to the findings, Whitaker and Molstad (1988) came to three conclusions. First, it is evident that the perceived gender differences in coaches may actually fade with direct experience with both male and female coaches. Second, high school students reported a greater identification with female role models than did college students. High school students who perceived a difference said that a female role model was superior to a male role model. Finally, neither the high school or college subgroups reported significant preference of one gender over another.

Based on these conclusions Whitaker and Molstad (1988) felt that it is "theoretically possible that the female athlete/learner may be more impressed by either a) the female coach/model because of the perceived similarity of that gender model with the learner herself or b) the male coach/model because of the greater likelihood of his sport involvement being perceived as a successful behavior pattern" (p.564). They also felt that the importance of a female coach as a role model is increasing as more and more female athletes participate in sport.

Whitaker and Molstad (1988) indicated that further study was needed to detail the dynamics of the modeling process with female athletes and female

coaches. They felt that subjects should represent a broader range of age, type of sport, sport setting, and sport level.

In this chapter, some of the ways in which coaches play a significant role in the personal growth and development of an athlete have been reviewed. The challenges of coaching are different at the elementary, secondary, and university level. However, the importance of supportive and encouraging coach behaviours remains consistent at all levels of sport participation. The female adolescent athlete in particular shows a preference for a female role model (Whitaker & Molstad, 1987 & 1988; Lovett & Lowry, 1991). The female coach is more interested and motivated in passing along more expressive traits and coaching the athlete as a whole person. She also scored higher in the studies that examined those traits associated with personal growth and development (Whitaker & Molstad, 1987; Molstad 1993).

What these other studies fail to examine is the amount of time an athlete spends with their coach and what kind of an impact this can have on the relationship. As social learning theory suggests a significant amount of time needs to be invested in the relationship in order to obtain maximum benefits. These previous studies also focus on those athletes who are in the later years of high school or college and fail to recognize early adolescence, which has been identified as the most impressionable age. All but Ginsburg's study felt that more research needed to be conducted in role modeling especially between the female coach and the female athlete.

The relevance of social learning theory to the female coach/female athlete relationship is compelling. The model described as a significant and sought after individual under social learning theory is similar to the type of role model female athletes look for. Similarly, the coach's position as a role model for the adolescent looking for someone other than a parent is imperative. The close, trusting relationship between coach and female athlete may be necessary to achieve peak performance. The athlete may spend more time with her coach than any other significant person in her life, including parents, teacher, or peers. During this time the coach and athlete share goals and dreams, as well as success and disappointment. Through this experience they develop an emotional bond. A bond that gives the perfect opportunity for the role model to instill those behaviours and qualities associated with personal growth and development. This bond is necessary for the athlete to put their full trust in the coach to lead them to maximum performance and support them. Through emulating their coaches, adolescent female athletes can develop a stronger sense of themselves, both in sports and life. Through this supportive relationship young athletes have the opportunity to develop a better sense of who they are, and contribute to developing a stronger sense of identity.

The Present Study

The present study was conducted using a qualitative case study method. The data was gathered- through a semi-structured interview focusing on the intricacies and psychological benefits of the relationship between a coach and an athlete. Thirteen adolescent female athletes were interviewed. While interviewing each athlete, her relationship with a significant coach was addressed and the impact of this coach on the development of her sense of self was explored. This study was guided by several questions that were based on social learning theory, and were informed by the gender, coach as a role model, and female coach as a role model literature.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Subjects

The participants in this study were 13 adolescent female athletes. They ranged in age from 15-18, and came from a variety of sports including artistic gymnastics (5 athletes, 2 15 year olds, 3 16 year olds), soccer (4 athletes, 2 15 year olds, 2 17 year olds), figure skating (2 athletes, 1 16 year old, 1 18 year old), track and field (1 athlete, 18 years old), and equestrian (1 athlete, 18 years old). Many different team and individual sports were contacted in the hope that there would be a variety of sport participation; however some sports were not able to participate in the time frame given.

The participants selected identified having a significant relationship with a female coach. A significant relationship in this study is considered as an established relationship with a female coach who has had the greatest impact on the athlete, as an athlete and as a person in society. Someone they would consider a role model. If they had to choose between athletic development versus personal growth and development, they were instructed to select the female coach who has best facilitated their personal growth and development. It was also important to select an individual who has influenced the person they are today. All of the 13 athletes interviewed said that the identified significant coach met their perceptions about what an ideal coach should be. The athletes were asked if they were still in contact with the coach they identified as being a role model. All of the participants agreed that their

focal coach corresponded to their perception of an ideal coach, and 12 of the 13 athletes (i.e., 92%) still stayed in contact with her. Finally the athletes were asked how long the coach identified as being significant had coached them. The athletes and the identified coaches spent an average of 3.5 years together.

The initial contact was through coaches. The study was explained in detail to them and they were then asked if they would be willing to participate by being interviewed. The coaches were recruited through personal and professional contacts of the researcher. Once there was an agreement to proceed from the coach the researcher then asked when would be a good time to speak with the athletes. All of the coaches said at the beginning of a regular practice that did not interfere with competition time. At the first visit the study was explained in detail to the athletes as a whole group (see Appendix A). The athletes in attendance during the first visit were all provincial or national level athletes, training between ten and twenty hours a week (depending on the sport). During this first visit after all of the athletes arrived and the description of the study had been conducted the researcher passed out a confidential form (see Appendix B), indicating whether or not they had a significant relationship with a female coach, and if they were willing to participate in a study. These were handed back to the researcher who then left. After reviewing each confidential form the researcher then contacted each athlete who fit the criteria. This was a purposeful selection as the researcher was looking for athletes who fit certain criteria at a particular practice.

Purposeful Selection

The objective of purposeful sampling is to ensure selection of information-rich subjects. Patton (1990) suggested that these are subjects that can yield in-depth information about the issue. "The purpose of purposeful sampling is to select information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study" (Patton, 1990, p. 169). Therefore proper participant selection can increase the credibility of the research findings. The current study implemented a purposeful selection process by specifically choosing only athletes who had been coached by both male and female coaches. The athletes also have, had a significant relationship with a female coach. Further the athletes had to be either provincial or national level athletes. This selection was based on social learning theory and the point that time spent with a model is important in the modeling process. The more time spent with the model the more chance there is for modeling to occur. This approach increased the credibility of the participants by having a systematic selection process with the criteria for inclusion set by the researcher.

Instruments

Interviews for this study were based on an interview guide developed by Richard Decker Ginsberg (1998) (see Chapter 2 and positive coach athlete relationships) (see Appendix C). The interview guide for the current study (see Appendix D) was chosen as Ginsberg studied the positive coach-athlete relationship between male athletes and male coaches. As is the purpose of the current study Ginsburg was interested in the benefits of the relationship between

athletes and influential positive coaches. The interview was adapted for use with female athletes, with social learning theory as the framework. Ginsberg found that the coach/player relationship is a “good fit” for the athlete, given his circumstances and psychological needs; the coach/player relationship as a facilitation of the player’s experience of separation-individuation (facilitation of the player’s experience of separation-individuation is the athlete beginning to become an individual and move away from the dependence on their parents); and the coach/player relationship as a medium for identification with an important adult male role model (Ginsburg, 1998). Ginsburg was also interested in how the coaches perceived the relationship and his role within the relationship. As coaches’ perceptions were not the focus of this current study, questions pertaining to coaches’ feelings/thoughts were not included (see Appendix C for interview guide).

The interview guide for this study (see Appendix D) is based on a semi-structured, or as Yin (1994) refers to it as a “focused interview” outline. In a focused interview the participants are interviewed for a short period of time, usually up to an hour. In this type of interview the interview can still remain fairly open, that is where specific questions are asked but the questions are arranged in such a manner as to allow the interviewee to expand or add any other pertinent information. With this style of interviewing the interviewer and the interviewee carry on a conversation with no precise end, the interviewer will continue with probing questions until they are satisfied with having enough

information, for example this type of interview may be used in a biography type of situation.

In the current study's interviews athletes were asked to recall a moment or moments that would describe their relationship with a coach. Focused interviewing can still follow a conversation type situation but it is more likely to follow a certain set of question derived from the case study protocol (Yin, 1994). The interview was focused or semi-structured in the style used by Hendricks (1995) and Jacobo (1997) and allowed for open-ended, in-depth responses in which the interviewee described her thoughts, feelings, and experiences. This process highlighted the importance of both the content of participants' narratives and the accompanying emotions. Not only did interviewing the athletes in person give the study the information needed for analysis, the in-person contact provided the researcher direct contact with the emotion involved in these relationships. It was imperative for this study to capture exactly what the interviewees had to say about their experience with and the salient features of a female role model, to extract rich useable data.

The first section of the interview was designed to create comfort for the athlete by conducting it in a familiar area with introduction questions like "how long have you been playing sports? And what do you like about playing sports"? This was also done to develop a rapport between the athlete and the interviewer. Doing this helped to provide an atmosphere where the athlete felt comfortable enough to open up and share her experiences more readily. The athletes were told that there were no incorrect answers, the questions were only asked to elicit

their opinion. The interview addressed the relationship between the athlete and her coach. Probing took place whenever necessary to explore the interpersonal dynamics between the athlete and her coach and recount significant memories or experiences that would help bring to life important events that had influence in their lives. The probing was accomplished by asking the athlete to give me more information or by expanding on something they said such as “so you think you made a connection with her based on the fact that you were both females?”

Procedure

The interviews were conducted with the athletes in their sport setting (e.g. gymnasium, arena, field) to encourage comfort for the athlete as well as to perhaps prompt memories by being in the place where the memories took place. Sometimes the interviewer and interviewee were given a room separate from the practice area, other times the interviews were conducted in the same area as the practice. The only drawback to having the interviews in the same area as the practice was noise. Sometimes it was difficult to hear over the background noise. If the interview was conducted in the same area as the practice it was held in a location that did not distract other athletes or the athlete being interviewed. This was done to maintain a comfortable atmosphere for the athlete.

Each interview lasted between thirty minutes and one hour. Prior to the beginning of each interview the purpose of the study was explained and the interviewee was asked if they had any questions or did not understand something during the interview to let the researcher know. They were then asked to provide the informed consent form signed by either themselves, if over eighteen, or by a

parent/guardian, if under eighteen (see Appendix C) which reiterated the purpose of the study and solicited permission to audiotape and videotape the session. Each interview was audiotaped and videotaped. This was done to ensure that precise transcripts were available for analysis. The researcher mounted the video camera on a tripod and pressed record, the researcher then pressed the record button on the cassette tape recorder. The audiotapes were reviewed first in making the transcripts and the videotapes were used as a means to back up the audiotapes. The audiotapes were played on a tape player and a computer was used to transcribe verbatim the words from the tapes. If there were any words, which were hard to understand on the tapes, the researcher then consulted the videotapes to aid in the transcription. Handwritten notes were also taken at each interview to help the researcher with probing and understanding what the athlete was trying to communicate. At the end of the interview, questions and feedback were encouraged.

Data Analysis

Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit. Researchers want to find out what is on an individual's mind and gather the stories surrounding an event or issue from the individual (Patton, 2002). The objective of this thesis was to identify as many rich and useful pieces of information as possible within the data set that represented each athlete's perceptions of their personal growth and development and time with a coach who was identified as a role model. The thirteen athlete interviews were

transcribed verbatim to produce 48 pages of single spaced text. The interviews were read several times by the researcher to: 1) ensure that the transcripts were verbatim and without errors; 2) completely understand the relationship between each athlete and coach; 3) to become very familiar with the possible data in each interview, and 4) begin to analyze the data.

The analysis presented in the following chapter outlines, explains, and analyzes what 13 adolescent female athletes experienced while being coached by separate female coaches. The case study approach was chosen to aid in the analysis of the data.

Case Studies

Case studies are defined as, an “empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 1994 p.13). Case studies are used when a researcher wants to cover contextual conditions that they feel are essential to the phenomenon being studied. Such data are regarded as real life events. Case studies do not necessarily fit into a theoretical framework. For the most part they create their own theories. Creswell (1998) explains this possibility. “Unquestionably, some case studies generate theory, some are simply descriptions of cases, and others are more analytical in nature and display cross-case or inter-site comparisons” (p. 186). This is not to say that case studies lose any credibility when regarded in this manner. They are very versatile and work well in a variety of situations.

Yin (1994), a prominent case study researcher, explains case studies are to be used when a researcher is asking how or why questions. This is because these questions deal with issues needing to be traced over time, rather than examining just frequencies or incidences (Yin, 1994). Case studies will also be used if the researcher has little control over events, and when the focus is on a current phenomenon within some real-life context. For instance, the current research is trying to establish how the female coach facilitates personal growth and development in the adolescent female athlete. For an investigator there is no control over what the female athletes experienced. In this case an investigator cannot go in and actually provide or mold a relationship. This is a phenomenon that must occur on its own. These experiences are in a real-life context under the phenomenon of the female coach as a role model. "Case studies are an appropriate research method when you are trying to attribute causal relationships - and do not just want to explore or describe a situation" (Yin, 1993 p.31). With the current study, a causal or fundamental relationship is being examined. These coaches are assumed to contribute to the personal growth and development of female adolescent athletes.

As with Creswell above, Yin (1994) believes that there are three types of case studies, explanatory, exploratory and descriptive. Explanatory case studies are used to explain a phenomenon. These case studies ask the "how and why" questions. With exploratory case studies a researcher is exploring a phenomenon and will ask questions such as "why this and not this?" or what. In this case study there is reason to believe that a certain outcome will be

demonstrated. There is a certain level of rationale and the study has merit even if the researchers' assumptions are proved wrong. The descriptive case study traces the sequence of interpersonal events over time. There is a key phenomenon that affects a group of individuals. A descriptive case study presents a complete description of a phenomenon within its context. The choice of the type of case study is rooted in three conditions: the type of research question posed; the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioural events and; the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events (Yin, 1994 p. 4). The current case studies were both descriptive and analytical in nature. Analytically they display cross-case comparison. Essentially what this study is examining are thirteen cases that have been brought together because of their similarities.

When using case studies it is imperative to decide whether single or multiple case study theory will be used. This must be done, as studies that contain more than a single case are required to use a multiple case design. Multiple case studies are considered comparative. "The evidence from multiple cases is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust" (Yin, 1994, p.45). For the current research a multiple case study approach was used. Multiple case studies include two or more cases within the same study. These multiple cases should be selected so they are replicating each other. This can be either an exact (direct) or predictably different (systematic) replication (Yin, 1993). It is assumed that the same or similar responses will occur from each of the participants.

As Yin (1994) explains the interview process can be quite important for case study research. "One of the most important sources of case study information is the interview. Such a conclusion may be surprising, because of the usual association between interviews and the survey method. However, interviews are also essential sources of case study information" (p.84).

Coding Procedures

To aid in the organization and extraction of information from the transcripts a software package NVIVO (QSR NUD*IST, 1998) specifically designed for sorting, stringing, and analyzing qualitative research was used with each interview. The software allowed for all information to be stored and sorted in one area. The software provides the researcher the means with which to organize sections of text into nodes, and then into trees. NVIVO is organized for the researcher to follow this exact procedure. Nodes are the organization of meaning units that Tesch (1990) defines as important pieces of information, which are a section of text that contains one idea and is understandable on its own. The intention of the research was to represent accurately the information given by the athletes. All of the meaning units that are alike or represent a common idea are grouped together. NVIVO also allowed for the organization and re-organization of nodes, and trees quite freely and easily. The process of handling data electronically rather than manually limited the risks of making tagging and categorizing errors (Cote, Salmela, Baria, & Russell, 1993). Not to mention the loss of data. For this

research both electronic and manual strategies were used, allowing for the researcher to view different aspects of the data concurrently.

Creating nodes Each interview was coded to capture important pieces of information (Strauss, 1987). This first stage of analysis involved identifying the meaning units, then categorizing them into common themes, which are known in NVIVO as nodes. After the transcripts (interviews) were coded twenty nodes existed. Within these twenty nodes there were 325 meaning units categorized.

Creating trees (themes) The second stage of analysis involved taking the twenty nodes and linking them together based on commonalities to form themes. In the NVIVO software themes are referred to as trees. Each tree was labeled to describe adequately the nodes contained within each tree. During this process the data is reduced to sort text into categories. Not all of the information is used in a qualitative study. Creswell (1998) explains how the process of reducing the large number of nodes into smaller categories. "Typically, regardless of the size of the database, I do not develop more than 25-30 categories of information, and I find myself working to reduce these to the 5 or 6 that I will use in the end to write my narrative" (p142). The creation of these smaller categories known as trees for this study provided the necessary organization for further analysis. The nodes are placed together based on internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity (Patton, 2002). "The first criterion (internal homogeneity) concerns the extent to which the data that belong in a certain category hold together or "dovetail" in a

meaningful way. The second criterion (external heterogeneity) concerns the extent to which differences among categories are bold and clear” (p. 465).

Basically similar nodes are categorized with one another.

The six trees at this point were still in the development stage. They could be changed, modified or deleted all together as the deeper analysis took place.

After the data was collected, a review of the research question was imperative to ensure a complete and rich analysis. The first step was to review the issue of reflexivity, which Huberman and Miles (1994) describe as a “regular, ongoing, self-conscious documentation of successful versions of coding schemes, of conceptual arguments among project staff, of analysis episodes both successful ones and dead end ones” (p.439).

Reflexivity is an important concept as it allows researchers the opportunity to review the process and determine what was successful and what was not. In all research reflexivity will happen to some degree perhaps more so in an unconscious manner. However, when documented and self-conscious the data and process can become invaluable, as it is ongoing during the coding. Meaning units, nodes and themes can be changed, renamed, added to or discarded during the entire analysis process. This ensures that the most important and rich data is extracted from what the athletes said. As each researcher experiences the qualitative research process it is important for the individual to identify and challenge the assumptions and understandings that they brought to the research

process, and to examine and reflect on experiences and new insights that emerged as they engaged in the process.

Understanding the importance of reflexivity, the purpose of this study was to explore how the female coach was a role model for personal growth and development in the adolescent female athlete. It was during analysis that the importance of reflexivity was discovered.

Establishing Trustworthiness

The data obtained from the interview procedures relied solely on the athletes' retrospective recall. Measures were implemented to validate and ensure a level of trustworthiness from the information gathered. Patton (1990) suggested the importance of finding similar results using different data-collection techniques. This section discusses the safeguards taken to ensure the trustworthiness of results. Trustworthiness can be defined as the process by which "an inquirer can persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of. What arguments can be mounted, what criteria invoked, what questions asked, that would be persuasive on this issue." (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.290)

Triangulation Case studies require the researcher to look at triangulation of information (Stake, 1995). Patton (1990) discussed the importance of triangulation of data suggesting the "importance of using different data-collection techniques and different evaluation research" as strategies to study the same program (p. 464). However Patton also warns that triangulation can be expensive and time consuming, and should therefore triangulation should be done

reasonably and practically. Triangulation of information involves searching for the convergence of information. This is done to verify that the information is correct. A researcher will ask the same question of all the sources of evidence. If all of the sources point to the same answer, the researcher has a successful triangulation. With each interview the research audio-taped, video-taped and took notes, to ensure that all of the data possible was understood, and that verification checks could be made at a later time. One way to do this is through member checks (Creswell, 1998; Stake, 1995). The researcher contacted participants following transcription to verify that what they were trying to say was actually conveyed during the interview. Following the data analysis the researcher again contacted the participants and asked them if the results and what they were actually trying to communicate was the same thing. Another way to verify the correct information is to look at the data as a whole. The researcher attempted to find commonalities across the subjects' experiences in each sport and sought to identify essential elements of coaching that positively influenced the athletes' developing sense of self.

In this process, the depth of the analysis has been enhanced by the experience of writing, re-examining, and reviewing the interviews and the findings. This thesis is written in a linear-analytic structure (Yin, 1994). This structure follows a traditional pattern. The issue or problem being studied is presented, a review of literature follows, the methods are presented next, the findings and analysis follow the methods, and finally the conclusions and implications are last. Yin (1994) explains when this structure should be used,

“The structure is comfortable to most investigators and probably is the most advantageous when research colleagues or a thesis or dissertation committee constitutes the main audience for a case study” (p.138). This type of structure can be applied to explanatory, descriptive, exploratory, single and multiple case study research.

Chapter 4

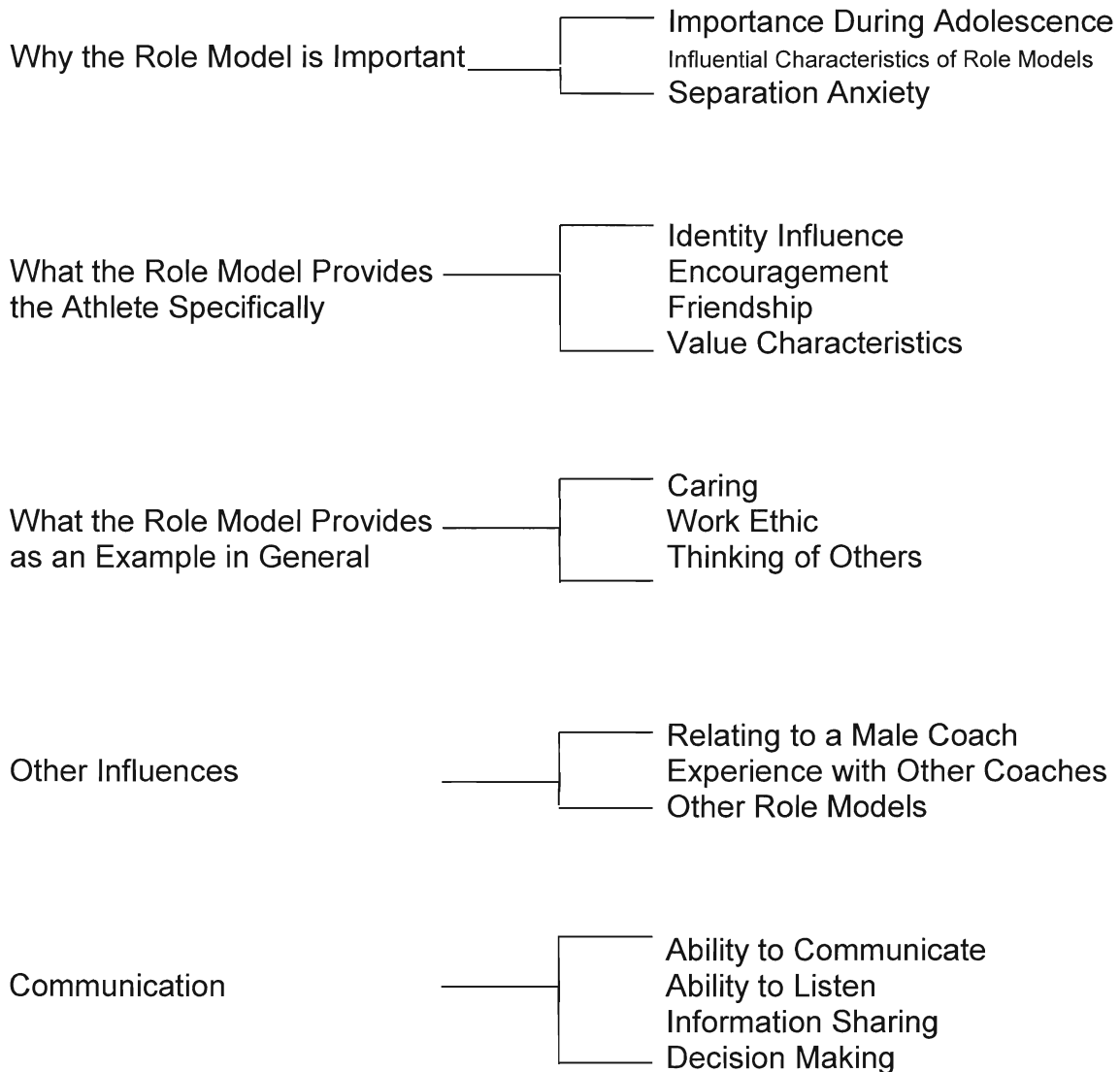
Results

There were three hundred and twenty-five passages or meaning units categorized. As analysis took place these passages were divided into twenty nodes, and finally into six trees (see Figure 1). The results from the data analysis are presented in this section. The description will explain the inductive process from the second highest-level trees (categories) and progress downward to nodes and finally meaning units. This progression will permit the retracing of information through the inductive process to the original starting point. It is important to note that the original inductive process was initiated with meaning units pulled directly from the text that was then progressively placed in higher ordered categories (nodes). Further, the inductive process ended at the theme (tree) level. Each section will use the theme name for identification purposes. There was purposeful selection in the order of the themes and also in the order of the nodes. They were placed in order from the most to least significant. The order of the themes and nodes was determined by reviewing the literature and deciding which ones provided the most information, and support for the study. All the themes and nodes have been included because they represent an important part to formulating the most complete picture of the athlete's development. Five themes were identified in the coding process.

Figure 1 Breakdown of themes and the nodes associated with each theme.

Themes

Nodes



The themes consisted of: 1) why a role model is important, 2) how the coach is a role model to the athlete, 3) how the coach is a role model in general, 4) other influences; and 5) communication. The themes and dimensions of each node are described in the following section. An inspection of the themes and node are provided along with supportive meaning unit quotations. Because of the large number of meaning units, the purpose of presenting these quotations is not to illustrate all the data but rather provide examples that represent the participant's development. Dimensions with less representation are included in the results because specific information contributed from each participant may provide a "broader base from which to study" athlete development (Cote, Salmela, Baria, & Russell, 1993, p.77).

Why the role model is important

The first theme established is why the role model is important. There are three nodes that were identified in this theme: importance of a role model during adolescence; influential characteristics of role models; and finally, separation anxiety when the coach and athlete had to part.

Importance during adolescence These athletes have become quite comfortable with the coach and come to rely on sharing intimate concerns, ideas, questions and feelings during this tumultuous time. "She is what I was looking for in a coach. She is what I needed at the time" Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast). "Did you ever discuss issues related to your outside life with this coach? Yes, boyfriends, pregnancy, sex. She was someone who I could trust

and go to and wouldn't tell anyone else" Participant 10 (age 18, Figure Skater).

The athletes also feel that they can speak more freely with a female coach about issues related to personal growth and development because they feel that the female coach has already experienced this period in their lives and they can, therefore, relate to the experiences of the athlete.

"Not really, it's kind of hard to talk to male people sometimes.

Sometimes you need a girl because they understand a little bit better because their mind works the same as yours does and maybe they have gone through it so they could explain it" Participant 12 (age 16, Figure Skater).

"Maybe because she would understand things like when you are going through PMS or something, she would know what you were going through and understand what you were going through and understand and I guess a male coach wouldn't. She would understand female things" Participant 13 (age 15, Gymnast).

"I think it is the most vital time in someone's life between those ages. I just think it is so important. Just because she was there, just knowing I had that relationship and she was older it was neat to have someone who was like an older sister. It was meaningful having her tell me things she had experienced, including things that were wrong and weren't a good idea. I always remember the things that she told

me and I think that who I have become definitely had a lot to do with her” Participant 4 (age 18, Equestrian).

The female athlete can provide experienced advice and help with decision making and shaping the individual. They share their own experiences and can offer advice as to why they made certain decisions and why these were the right choices or not.

“Spending those vital years with her allowed me to miss those bad years or the bad stage. The stage girls go through from grade 8 until OAC. I didn’t go through any of that and I am positive it was because I spent so much time in my sport and so much time with this coach” Participant 4 (age 18, Equestrian).

Influential characteristics of role models The athletes were asked, “How was your coach a role model? And what makes this coach a good role model”? The researcher was interested in finding out how the athlete views a role model and how they would define this role model. The athletes define someone who is strong and independent, someone with focus. “Well, she works really extremely hard and she is always doing her best with everything she does is in the best interest of other people. She knows what she has to do sometimes and she does what takes to do it” Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast). “She had pretty much her life set out and she knew what she wanted to do” Participant 3 (age 16, Gymnast).

“Because she has been through so much in her life and it’s amazing how she can still be the person she is now. It makes me think that I

can get things done like her Just again, how much they have been through in their life and that they still got through it and they can still smile and have fun” Participant 6 (age 15, Soccer).

The comfort that the role model provides gives the athlete the feeling of security. “She just always helped me by, if I was upset she just always understood about things. If we had a lot of homework, she would let us have an extra long break. She just understood” Participant 5 (age 15, Soccer). “She was nice, kind and funny and when you are down she can make you laugh or comfort you” Participant 8 (age 16, Gymnast).

The athletes appreciate the advice that the role model provided. “She is the type of person that can give me some advice” Participant 2 (age 17, Soccer).

“I spent a lot of time with her family, and something she taught me a lot about was life in general, you know like growing up and stuff like that. She kind of took me under her wing. Kind of like a sister” Participant 4 (age 18, Equestrian).

Favourable role model traits appear to be kindness to everyone, honest, intelligent, respectful, and an all around good person. “She is like respectful to other people and even if she has a problem she doesn’t show it. She is just respectful. She is like a good person; she gets along with all people” Participant 5 (age 15, Soccer). “She was respectful She is fun, smart and intelligent, nice, easygoing, easy to talk to” Participant 10 (age 18, Figure Skater).

“She is a role model because she has really good values, good values in life. She just believes to live life to the fullest. Like to live

everyday as it comes, don't worry about the things that happen in the past and just worry about the future" Participant 12 (age 16, Figure Skater).

Participant 13 (age 15, Gymnast) sums up her feelings about role models.

A role model has many traits and it is the whole package that makes that individual unique.

"She coached us for a while and now she has one kid and is married.

She still has time to still talk to us and keep in touch with us.

Everything, how she is responsible, honest, the way that she is with her friends, the way that she is a good coach. I guess it all matters the whole package. Compared to a bad role model, someone who does not care and just tells you what to do and is not there when you need them to be. Just that she had a big impact on my life. I am glad that she coached me for so long because I don't think that I would have the same train of thought that I have today" Participant 13 (age 15, Gymnast).

Separation Anxiety A majority of the athletes had to part from their coaches that brought with it a whole range of emotion. The athletes and coaches have both invested a lot of time and energy into this relationship and they don't want to loose the connection they have made.

"I found it really, really hard. I wasn't sure if we were going to stay as close as we were or if we were going to talk. Like I didn't know, it wasn't like in gym like I knew that when I left on Thursday that I

would see her on Friday at 12:30. It wasn't like that it was almost like this was it, I had to take things into my own hands and it was up to me about whether or not we were going to keep this relationship. I was scared, because she helps me deal with tons of stuff whether she knows it or not. Just being around her makes her life a little easier. I was upset too because I loved being coached by her, being with her and I loved her" Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

"It was hard because I was leaving friends and a coach behind and I was leaving a sport that I spent so much time in behind. I just had to get out I guess, but it was hard. I missed it a lot. I still sort of do when I think about it. I was really upset. I didn't want to leave all these good friends and such a good coach behind. Because that coach had an impact on me, I don't think that I will ever have a coach again that had such an impact on me" Participant 13 (age 15, Gymnast).

What the role model provides to the athlete specifically

The next theme identified was what the role model provides to the athlete. This theme deals with specific examples and instead of just observing the role model in their behaviours like the previous theme the athletes are now providing the characteristics that affected them directly. These characteristics include: identity influence; encouragement; friendship; and value characteristics.

Identity influence One of the questions asked during the interviews was “when you think about the person you are today, how has your identity been influenced by your coach?” The athletes’ answers brought a lot of insight in to how their identity had been influenced. The type of individual that has been molded from these positive influences is someone who is caring and aware of what possible recourse their actions and decisions might have.

“I think I developed most of my important characteristics from this coach from not I guess the sport too of it, my determination I guess I have adapted from her, I have always wanted to do my best not only for me but for her because she puts so much into me so I wanted to give her something back I guess you could say. And my awareness of the people around me and the way I am treating and the effect of what I am doing will have on other people; I have taken from her because I am just following her examples. I think ahead too because I have realized that my choices are going to mainly affect my life and I have to be careful about which ones I take” Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

“If they were not as good and awesome as I thought they were, I don’t think that I would look up to them as much and like them as much. She had a big impact on my life. I am glad that she coached me for so long because I don’t think that I would have the same train of thought that I have today” Participant 13 (age 15, Gymnast).

"I think that it really helped build the person that I am. It really went from impersonal to personal because you really got to know them better"

Participant 2 (age 17, Soccer).

The athletes learn and copy those personality characteristics that they see as positive attributes, such as sense of humor, kindness, confidence, and honesty.

"Well before I met my coach, I was a lot different, I was really shy. I wouldn't go up to people and talk to them. When I first started skating I wasn't really a performer on the ice. I kind of just went out there and was like okay what am I doing out here. But when I met my coach, she brought out the performer in me. My friends say that I have a really good sense of humor and easy to talk to and outgoing and everything. I think that she brought that out because she is like that herself. I think that it just rubbed off on me. I guess the whole, not a drastic personality change, but a personality change for the good" Participant 11 (age 18, Track and Field).

"I am definitely a lot more confident. She showed me that I could be confident but I was also told by her how good I was. She told me how passionate about the sport I was. I am a lot more outgoing. I used to be shy and nervous a lot, and just very uncomfortable. I would say that I am much more outgoing now" Participant 4 (age 18, Equestrian).

The athletes feel so strongly about the influence that these coaches provide that they feel they would not have become the individuals they are without this influence. "If she were not as good and awesome as I thought she was, I don't think that I would look up to her as much and like her as much" Participant 13 (age 15, Gymnast).

"I am just following her examples. I think ahead too because I have realized that my choices are going to mainly affect my life and I have to be careful about which ones I take. Basically she's a really great person and I have been lucky to connect with her and it's been quite the experience and I am totally grateful that I have had the chance to be influenced by her" Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

The influence that these coaches have on these athletes is very compelling they want to impress and make their coach proud of them. "I think that they have a lot of influence on me. I always want to impress them and make them proud of me" Participant 6 (age 15, Soccer).

Encouragement. Encouragement is a characteristic that received a lot of attention from the athletes. Encouragement for the athlete came during many phases and times that they were with their coach. For instance when the athlete was feeling low and needed an extra push.

"They'd be able to push me even if I thought I couldn't be pushed any further, but it would be positive. Positive pushing I guess I would say. It wouldn't be discriminating what I am doing. It would be encouraging me to keep going. I remember she was talking to me

and there are certain things that she does that totally inspires me things about how taking the greatest risk we can take is not taking one and things that maybe you want to become a better person and try harder” Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

“There was one time that I went to all Ontario’s and I placed tenth out of twelve, and I was supposed to be the kind of winner like everyone expected me to be. After I got tenth I had a horrible skate and I was so down on myself. She helped me through it, she told me not to give up, you have next year and all this, she got me through it, we got a new program and just being like gave me a second breath of wind kind of thing. That really helped me because I was really beside myself because I didn’t win” Participant 11 (age 18, Track and Field).

The athletes also seek encouragement outside of sport and once the athlete and coach has parted. Not in a specific area of their life but a general feeling of encouragement.

“She sort of taught me through skating and through my regular life as well, to stick up for what you believe in use your morals is a big part of your life because you don’t want to be suckered into anything”

Participant 11 (age 18, Track and Field).

“We keep in touch through email and if I am worried about an exam, say I don’t think I will do well, I can email her and she will email me back and tell me she thinks that I will do fine” Participant 12 (age 16, Figure Skater).

“Mostly if I get down or upset with one of the skills that I couldn’t do. She

would encourage me and always be there for me if I got upset” Participant 3 (age 16, Gymnast). “Now I play volleyball and I wanted to quit a couple of days ago because something happened and it just made me think of her because she always told me not to quit and stuff” Participant 7 (age 16, Gymnast).

Friendship The athletes want to form a connection with their coach, a relationship that goes further than the obvious coach/athlete relationship. They wanted a relationship that they call a friendship.

“And they would be able to listen, like if I had a problem, not only with sports but outside they would be able to listen and give me advice and help me out and athletically the same. I would have to build up friendship, relationship with them” Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

“It’s kind of like coach on the ice and friend off the ice” Participant 11 (age 18, Track and Field).

This friendship is so important that one participant explains that the relationship goes to an emotional level. “I think that it really helped build the person that I am. It really went from impersonal to personal because you really got to know them better it’s not so much just teaching you but you got to an emotional level I guess” Participant 2 (age 17, Soccer).

It is important to the athlete that the coach is able to draw the line and still remain a coach while also being a friend. They want the lightness of the

friendship but also want someone who is knowledgeable and will keep them motivated.

Value characteristics The athletes highlight trust, honesty, respect and moral example to be important features from a role model.

“She is a role model because she has really good values, good values in life. She just believes to live life to the fullest. Like to live everyday as it comes, don’t worry about the things that happen in the past and just worry about the future” Participant 12 (age 16, Figure Skater).

“She is someone who I could trust and go to and wouldn’t tell anyone else” Participant 10 (age 18, Figure Skater).

“I think it was really that she showed me that she trusted me a lot and gave me a lot of responsibility, I knew I could take on but no one else thought I was ready except her. She would make her assistant with other groups like during summer camps. She makes me feel like I have been a vital part of her life as well” Participant 4 (age 18, Equestrian). “She knew how to treat others with respect and stuff, she was never rude” Participant 8 (age 16, Gymnast).

What the role model provides as an example in general

Another theme to develop was what the role model provides as an example in general. This theme developed from what the athletes said about those characteristics they look for in a role model in general. These are characteristics that the role model possesses and through behaviour is able to

display them. These characteristics are ones associated with values and morals and the coach may not always be aware that they have these qualities. These characteristics include, caring, work ethic, and thinking of others.

Caring The first characteristic is caring. The athletes are searching for a connection to someone who will care about them as separate individuals and not just athletes.

“She is really caring and she knows what she has to do sometimes and she does what takes to do it. I guess I just find overall she is a very unique person and she makes the most of what she has and she never stops thinking of other people and I guess she never stops caring” Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

“She likes to see the good in everyone. I think that is her best quality. She is very fun to be with and she is always there for everyone” Participant 3 (age 16, Gymnast).

“She kind of worries about me but not like a mom. It showed that she was not just worrying about my gymnastics, she actually cared about me outside of the sport” Participant 9 (age 17, Soccer).

Work ethic A common idea by all athletes was the example a role model set with work ethic. That is how hard they work, and their desire to excel in whatever they are doing. “Well, she works really extremely hard and she is always doing her best with everything she does” Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

"I have learned how to be a successful kind of athlete but also to develop morals. Don't get into the whole snobbery of skating, too competitive in skating and stuff. She told me just to work hard for what I want and in order to get what I want I have to work hard. She also taught me the basics of practice what you do when you want to compete with it and stuff like that" Participant 11 (age 18, Track and Field).

"I guess she taught me that work will always come before success. When I first started off I didn't know anything about the sport, so she taught me that you really have to work hard to achieve anything" Participant 2 (age 17, Soccer).

Thinking of others The athletes are drawn to a coach who is aware of how their actions will affect others. They are able to distinguish between good and bad coaches and thinking of others is an important characteristic for the good coach. "Doing her best with everything she does is in the best interest of other people. She is always thinking of how it will affect others" Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

"She is always in a good mood. She is uplifting; she will not be rude or selfish at a competition. Where as a bad role model would be out there yelling if the athlete was to do something bad or if an athlete does bad at a competition they would be yelling at the kid, doing things that are unprofessional of them" Participant 11 (age 18, Track and Field).

Other Influences

During the interviews it became apparent that there are other people who have had an influence in the lives of these athletes. Male coaches, other coaches, parents, and peers were identified. These other influences can be good, bad or indifferent, it was important for the athlete to focus on these other people.

Relating to a male coach It was important to this study to ask about the athletes' about their experiences with male coaches. During recruitment for this study the athletes were told that having been coached by both a male and a female coach was criteria to be involved in the study. The athletes were asked two questions to try and determine if the athlete could have the same significant relationship with a male coach. The questions were: Do you think the gender played a role? Do you think you would have had the same relationship if the coach were a male?

"I think so, actually no. I wouldn't be as comfortable talking to him. It's easier talking to a female because she can relate more, because she has gone through it" Participant 10 (age 18, Figure Skater). "I think so because I am more easily able to relate with females than males, because they are easier to talk to and stuff. Males are sort of awkward and stuff" Participant 2 (age 17, Soccer).

"No way. It would just be a totally different circumstance. I can't even explain it. Nothing that happened would have been the same. Not even if they were 19 like she was or 18 when I was 12. You can't

take that type of interest; it would have been weird for him to be interested in a 12-year-old girl. And so there would be no initial relationship that developed, it would have been purely coach. I would have also been not as comfortable with him I don't think I wouldn't have become as interested in the sport or as interested in the farm as I did. For sure there wouldn't have been the same interest taken in me" Participant 4 (age 18, Equestrian).

"Ya. I don't know. Not like a male coach wouldn't understand you, but I just don't think it would be very comfortable to talk about stuff like boys and stuff" Participant 8. "Probably not, because they really don't know what I am going through. Guys don't really care about anything else other than the sport that they are doing. They can't relate to the female as well" Participant 9 (age 17, Soccer). "Not really, it's kind of hard to talk to male people sometimes. Sometimes you need a girl because they understand a little bit better because their mind works the same as yours does and maybe they have gone through it so they could explain it" Participant 12 (age 16, Figure Skater). "Maybe because she would understand things like when you are going through PMS or something, she would know what you were going through and understand what you were going through and understand and I guess a male coach wouldn't" Participant 13 (age 15, Gymnast).

Experience with other coaches One question asked the athletes about their experience with another coach and how this coach compares to the coach

they have identified as being significant. What sets the role model apart from other coaches?

"They are different because one, although I have known one for longer, the one I was talking about she made a difference because she has taken the time to listen to me and she has taken the time to care when I really needed it and sometimes it's just the way that she corrected me or treated me, there are certain techniques that they both use that made them both different. On one hand there was one of them that made jokes about what I was doing and I didn't mind it of course, I just laughed with it. But I didn't find it as helpful as when my other coach would say things that made me want to work harder"

Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

"They are sort of the same; I had known the other coach for four years. But the only time I really see her after skating or after the Friday nights out. I can talk to her about the different things that happened to me, but not as well as I can talk to my other coach. I guess because I hadn't known her as long. I guess I am closer to my other coach" Participant 11 (age 18, Track and Field).

It is important for the coach to make that significant and emotional bond.

"Well, one coach was really not understanding and I couldn't talk to, it was just a coach and just tell me what was wrong and tell me what to do right and what I had to do to get this score and what I had to do to be this good and just was not easy to talk to and fun to be with. I

guess just more like a teacher. And the one we were just talking about was just fun. And was a good coach like a friend” Participant 13 (age 15 Gymnast).

The female athletes commented on how important it is to have more than just the sport relationship. “The other coach doesn’t meet up. He was just about sports and always acted like sport was more important” Participant 10 (age 18, Figure Skater).

“I was younger, but not that much younger. Probably like 10 or 12. They were strictly to their role as a coach and an authority figure, that is who I am and you will listen to me and this is how you will get better, I think especially at that age that is what you need in a way to make you successful and disciplined but also you need that other side because you are still young and sensitive” Participant 4 (age 18, Equestrian).

“This coach wasn’t friendly, I didn’t like her and we didn’t get along. She was more of a coach and not a friend” Participant 3 (age 16, Gymnast).

Other role models The first other role models identified were the athletes’ parents. It would appear that there is a stigma attached to the parents. The athletes feel comfortable sharing some information with their parents but certainly not all. There is no judgment associated with a role model outside of the parents.

“I don’t really talk to my parents that much they might not be my age but they were just not questions that I approach my parents with.

Maybe its because I wasn't sure what their reactions might be but I almost felt more comfortable asking and talking to her (coach) about these certain issues" Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

"It's just nice to have someone who is not a parent to talk to, it's just because she is half my age, but she's still in touch with the younger world. She is not all adult and stuff" Participant 12 (age 16, Figure Skater).

The other role models identified by the athletes are their peers or friends.

"It helped me out a lot because you can talk to your friends about it but they are all your age. They are all your age and we think the same. It just gave me a different perspective on my problems and I found her (coach) solutions and her (coach) advice and ideas were a lot more mature and helpful and they weren't things that I would have thought about on my own" Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

Communication

The next theme to be discussed is communication. Communication looks at how the coach is a successful communicator. This was divided into four sections: Ability to communicate, ability to listen, information sharing, and finally decision making. This theme looks at not only how efficient the coach was as a communicator, but also their ability to listen, relate, and share with the athlete.

Ability to communicate The athlete wants a coach who is a good communicator, someone who can speak to them on the same level. "I would

"Yes, we talk about things that happen at school; we have a lot of conversations about peer pressure" Participant 12 (age 16, Figure Skater).

Information sharing The athletes want to be able to share and converse with a coach equally. The connection between these two becomes easier and moves to a different level if the coach shares information with the athlete.

"She is a role model by showing how you should be acting on the ice and just pretty much, she tells us about her experiences as a skater and it helps us out with similar experiences that we have experienced as skaters" Participant 11 (age 18, Track and Field).

They learn from the models mistakes and are able to make decisions with more confidence.

"It was meaningful having her tell me things she had experienced, including things that were wrong and weren't a good idea. I always remember the things that she told me and I think that who I have become definitely had a lot to do with her. Spending those vital years with her allowed me to miss those bad years or the bad stage. The stage girls go through from grade 8 until OAC. I didn't go through any of that and I am positive it was because I spent so much time in my sport and so much time with this coach" Participant 4 (age 18, Equestrian).

Decision Making. The athletes feel that through good communication they were able to approach their coach for help in making decisions.

"If I ever have hard decisions to make that she'll be there to help me. It just gave me a different perspective on my problems and I found her solutions and her advice and ideas were a lot more mature and helpful and they weren't things that I would have thought about on my own" Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

Not only are the models helpful with decision-making, they help the athletes to become better decision makers.

"Being the best that I can be wasn't just in sports it was teaching me that my decisions will affect and influence what the way I am and I am going to have to live with those consequences. I think that I would try to imitate what she would do, or if it was over a long time, I would contact her and I would ask her about it and talk to her about it, or if it was on the spot thing, where I was being offered drugs, I guess I would try and think of what she would do in a similar situation most of the time but just because the influence she had on me I wouldn't have to think of her at the time, because she had the impact where I am in touch with myself and I know that I don't need to do that just for whatever reasons" Participant 1 (age 15, Gymnast).

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to examine the salient features of the female coach as a significant and essential role model in personal growth and development in the female adolescent athlete. More specifically it explored the reason why this connection is established. For the purpose of this study role model was defined, as “One viewed so positively that the socializee strives to be like him thus, someone who has a significant effect on socialization. There are both general role models (I admire everything he does and want to be just like him) and specific role models (I want to learn how he hits his back hand)” (Campbell, 1975 p.76). To add to this, a role model is an individual that others emulate and aspire to become. They can be admired based on a number of different attributes including behaviour, beliefs, knowledge, career, morals, attitudes and values.

Despite there being few studies that specifically examine the female coach as a role model to personal growth development to the adolescent female athlete, these coaches are unique and play a significant role to personal growth and development. This section will conceptualize and give meaning to the themes identified in the previous chapter.

Why the role model is important

The theme why the role model is important covers the athletes’ definition of role model, separation anxiety and importance during adolescence. The first two sub-themes have been already covered in other areas of the conclusion

the rest of this section will focus on the importance during adolescence. The findings in this section were quite compelling. The adolescent literature and theorists laid out the development of this age group. However, the researcher of the current study was not aware of the connection that exists between the adolescent literature and the social learning literature when it comes to modeling behaviour.

The transition from childhood into adulthood is a difficult one. During this time the adolescent will seek independence from their parents but still require a model to learn from (Carver & Scheier, 1992; Gabbard, 1992; Steinberg & Silverberg, 1992). The natural progression is to use models present in their lives. Social learning theory indicates that during this time as the individual moves into adolescence their responses will be performed without the model present. In the current study the athletes commented on how much separation anxiety they experienced when they had to part, yet they were able to continue using what they had learned from the role model long after they had to part. During this stage the adolescent according to Blos (1962) will begin to develop new values, new ways of thinking and understanding the world around them. There was evidence in this throughout the previous sections of results.

An issue that came up in a couple of the studies during the literature review was that college students do not really distinguish between female coaches and male coaches as role models and in some cases the male coaches were chosen as the better role model (Lovett & Lowry, 1991; Whitaker & Molstad,

1988). There is an explanation for this, which comes from the adolescent literature. During late adolescence there is a marked shift from dependence to independence. It is felt that the individual by this point has become a mature and self-reliant person in society. Therefore the college-aged athlete is well past the point of seeking a role model for personal growth and development. What they could be seeking in a role model at this point, is someone with a good win/loss record or experience within the technical aspect of sport. The same researchers, who found the preference in college-aged athletes, concluded that the female adolescent athlete in particular shows a preference for a female role model. This conclusion can have major implications.

In a variety of research areas researchers (Bandura & Walters, 1963; Campbell, 1975; Erikson & Blos, 1962; Greendorfer, 1977; Kenyon & McPherson, 1981) have concurred that, significant others in sport socialization are essential role models for the adolescent. This is true for male athletes and female athletes alike, as Ginsburg (1998) concluded that the coach/player relationship can be seen as a therapeutic construct in which caring and strong role models can have lasting effects on the lives, values, and successes of young men. As the researcher of this current study has concluded if this is the case that all adolescent males and females are in search of a positive role model, it is imperative that those individuals who are responsible for training and hiring coaches, are aware how much of a vehicle of opportunity lies in hiring a knowledgeable positive role model as a coach. Coaches also need to be aware

that this aspect of coaching exists and they are willing and able to assume the role model persona.

What the role model provides to the athlete specifically

The athletes in this study did not take the term role model or people to emulate lightly. They are very specific about the qualities they seek and seem to carry very high standards for these individuals.

It was established that an individual is drawn to qualities that are perceived as positive and similar by the learner. Once a connection is made the relationship develops and stops at a certain point. To move past this point in the relationship the athletes indicate that the role model must possess certain characteristics. They identified these characteristics as encouragement, friendship, value characteristics, and help with identity influence. Again those characteristics, which can be considered nurturing, are included.

The athletes are very concerned with how their role model views them; therefore encouragement becomes an important trait. All of the athletes commented that their coach provided encouragement in many areas of their lives. As was established earlier by the social learning theorists, children and, in this case adolescents will model directly and immediately following the behaviour however it will only be an accurate and correct behaviour if the child has motivation to do so. The model supplied this motivation through reinforcement. At this age the learner is seeking reinforcement for the modeled behaviour from the model. This is why these participants sought encouragement so powerfully.

Again the athletes are also looking for the nurturing sides of these coaches and appreciate how the role model fulfills these needs. Another nurturing trait that appears is friendship. The friendship would appear to be a step past the coach/athlete relationship. This is when the coach and athlete are able to connect on a different level. It seems that when the coach takes a vested interest in the lives outside of these athletes a friendship begins to form. At this point in their lives their main contact has been with their parents and their peers who can be also known as their friends. The athletes, through their interviews said that these role models were not parents and not peer but they fit the friend profile regardless. They want what a friendship can offer but they also want that person in their lives who is non-judgmental but knowledgeable and able to keep them motivated, a role model. These role models are also able to step outside of the friendship role and motivate the athlete in a personal way.

Moving past the friendship they want someone who they can trust and respect and, in the case of this study, possess value characteristics. Stewart (2000) also found that athletes were drawn to positive attributes, which included value characteristics. The literature was abundant with non-research based articles that commented on the coaches' ability to have an impact on how the athlete behaves, and is perceived as an individual in society. This gives the coach the perfect opportunity to pass on social, emotional, moral, and character building characteristics (Moore, 1970; Nakamura, 1996; Sabock, 1979; Vernacchia et. al, 1992).

In the identity section the athletes sum up how they have been influenced by their coaches. This section highlights all of the positive characteristics that this section has already covered. Again social learning theory explains that the individual will be drawn to a model they feel has positive characteristics. A common theme that has developed in this study is that all of the characteristics that have been highlighted by the athletes are positive, with the athletes also understanding what a role model is, it is concluded that this study lends support to social learning theory.

What the role model provides as an example in general

The role model is able to help develop the adolescent female athlete through a large variety of ways. Not only will the role model provide specific advice and exhibit behaviours directly to the learner, but the learner will also model the general behaviours of the role model. This implies that the coach and athlete may not even realize that modeling is occurring. It is therefore important that the coach understands that anything they do or say has the potential to be passed on to their athletes. This goes past being simply a coach. Almquist and Angrist (1977) agree with this finding.

The athletes in this study highlighted three main characteristics they felt were important in learning from the coach in general: caring; thinking of others; and work ethic. These characteristics go above and beyond what is expected in the role of a coach but they are expected in the role model.

Caring and thinking of others appear to be nurturing qualities. They appreciate someone who truly cares about them and what they do. It is also

important that they care about all of those people who they come in contact with.

The athletes are well aware of the level of compassion these coaches demonstrate. They are also aware when coaches demonstrate the opposite and are cruel to their athletes. In watching a good level of compassion and caring these athletes can then feel comfortable and begin to trust that if they need their coach to be there in a time of need they will be. These qualities were commented on in one way or another by all of the athletes. The adolescent female athlete wants their coach to be caring and compassionate not only with them but also with everyone.

It is important with work ethic that the coach not only instills in the athletes how essential it is to work hard in all aspects of their lives, but they must demonstrate this. When the athlete sees the coach working hard and achieving success, they learn that if they also work hard they will have success in their lives. This may help in deciding career choice as well (Nauta, Epperson, & Kahn, 1998). With the decline of female coaches, all sports need female athletes getting excited about and wanting to move into the position of coaches. This is especially true of administration and head coaching positions so that the female athlete is aware that not only men can hold these authoritative positions.

These positive characteristics are also valued outside of sport. What the athlete learns from these coaches can then be used in all areas of their lives and will continue long past the time they were involved in sport. Many researchers have concluded the same thing (Duda & Treasure, 2001; Luke, 1998; Moore, 1970; Nakamura, 1996; Sabock, 1979; Sarason, Sarason & Pierce, 1990; Smith

& Smoll, 1996; Veracchia et. al, 1992). This agrees with social learning theory (Bandura 1977, 1986; Bandura & Walters, 1963) and the step learners experience called retention process. These characteristics and the following ones are the root to what the definition of role model is based on.

Other Influences

Relating to a male coach Quite a bit of research has been conducted surrounding the issue of who is a better coach for the female athlete. After asking the subjects of this study about their experiences with male coaches, a lot of valuable information was received.

Overwhelmingly the athletes said that because their coach was a female they were able to relate to them more. This includes issues such as boys, PMS, understanding female concerns and issues, and simply growing up as a girl. The athletes said they would not be comfortable talking to a male coach about these issues and they felt that a male coach would not be comfortable either. Social learning theory agrees with this finding that positive effects of modeling are more likely to be seen when the person being modeled and the person modeling are of the same gender. This is due to differential reinforcement, greater attentiveness, and perceived similarity to the model (Bandura & Walters, 1963). This finding also holds merit within other literature paradigms (Anderson, 1995; Basow, 1979; Lovett & Lowry, 1991; Molstad, 1993; Seater & Ridgeway, 1976; Snyder & Spreitzer, 1973; Tidball, 1973; 1974; Whitaker & Molstad, 1987). As was presented in Chapter One, there has been a debate rising in the literature with regards to the above finding; however future researchers are encouraged to

explore this issue in depth with adolescent athletes who have had both female and male coaches during adolescence, as this project has. There are a couple of possible conclusions as to why a female may find male coaches to be better role models. First they may have never had a female coach. Second they may be past adolescence and are looking strictly for a technical advisor. Finally they may have been socialized early on by a male coach and therefore have never had the thought that they could have such a significant relationship with a coach.

The athletes also said that female coaches have an easier time understanding them because simply the coaches have for the most part been through the same things as they have. The coaches are then able to provide experienced advice. Literature support for this finding is found in Molstad (1993); and Whitaker and Molstad (1987).

The next issue raised by the athletes was that female coaches simply care about their lives outside of sport and helping them to develop into people. In other words they took a vested interest in the athlete as a whole. The male coaches they had had on the other hand were more interested in building the athlete and the technical aspects of the athlete and sport. Lindauer (2000), Millard (1993), Molstad (1993), Molstad and Whitaker (1987), Pinkston (1983), and Tomlinson and Yorganci (1997) all came to the same conclusion.

This study could have looked only at the differences in male and female coaches as role models to the female adolescent athlete.

Experience with other coaches What makes these identified coaches so different than other coaches? What this thesis sought to examine was what sets

the role model apart. According to the athletes they want someone who is able to crossover the athlete/coach line, someone who will be a friend and not only a technical advisor or coach. They want someone to take a vested interest in them and their lives outside of sport. The connection with the role model coach provides a motivation that was not possible with the other coaches. They also want someone who is positive. This last finding fits in with what social learning theory says (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Bandura & Walters, 1963) in that individuals will choose models with positive attributes and discard possible models that have those attributes that are not pleasing. These positive attributes are general in nature and follow a natural progression to affect the athletes' lives outside of the athletic environment. This will take place whether or not the athlete and/or coach is aware (Duda & Treasure, 2001; Luke, 1998; Sarason & Pierce, 1990; Smith & Smoll, 1996.)

Other role models With regards to other role models (parents and peers) the athletes are not as comfortable to share details about their personal lives with their parents. There are two reasons for this the first is that there is a stigma attached to these individuals. The athletes feel that they will be judged and made to feel bad by these possible role models. A coach, on the other hand, will not do this. The other reason is that the athletes feel that parents are too old to understand them and their peers are too young or close in age to them to be able to offer mature and experienced advice. The peer models are important for the adolescent female athlete, however they provide different modeling attributes than those of the coach. The literature suggests that when becoming involved in

sports, children look towards their peers as models and the motivation for becoming involved will be more intense if the parents place value on sport (Pudelkiewicz, 1970).

Communication

The athletes in this study indicate that good communication skills are a highly valuable coaching trait. The ability to communicate, listen, relate and share with the athlete gives the athlete the chance to understand completely what the coach is trying to pass on to the athlete. It also provides the opportunity for the athlete to develop good communication skills as well. Once good communication is established the connection between athlete and coach and the emotional bond that has developed is increased. According to Molstad and Whitaker (1987) female athletes perceive female coaches as being superior to male coaches in the quality: relates well to athletes. They concluded that female athletes place a high value on a coach's ability to interact sensitively and empathetically with athletes on a personal level. This finding and this conclusion lend support to what the current study found with regards to communication.

As these athletes mature into adults they will make mistakes and learn from these mistakes. However with the opportunity to have a close relationship the athletes reported that they have been encouraged by these coaches to really think about the decisions they are making and the possible consequences they will have to face. To do so at such a young age the young female begins to create a value set that may help to avoid bad situations in their future.

Yes/no or quantitative answers

Significant coach as ideal The fact that all of the athletes said that the coach they identified as being a role model to them, met or was influential in describing their ideal coach is very interesting. There could be two implications here, the first being that the athletes while answering this question were thinking about their role model and therefore automatically described their role model. This theory would lend itself nicely to social learning theory that developed differential reinforcement a practice in which, an individual will keep those outcomes that they favor and discard those that they feel are unfavorable, which then results in the individual's behaviour repertoire. Learning in this way is seen as a mechanistic process in which responses are automatic and unconscious and directly affected by any immediate consequence.

The other implication here was stated by participant 2 "She was the first actual coach that I had and I was with her for a really long time and she really sort of built that ideal. So every coach that I get now has to meet that ideal". With the athletes being young when they experience these coaches and the fact that they have built such a strong relationship their thoughts about a role model are built on this one interaction. The athlete expects to connect to every coach the same after that special encounter. Another encounter of this magnitude may never again occur with another coach, however the impact that this relationship has had will carry on well into the athlete's adult life.

Time with coach How much does this affect the relationship and the level the relationship is able to achieve? According to social learning theory the time

spent with a model is very significant. As social learning theory suggests a significant amount of time needs to be invested in the relationship in order to obtain maximum benefit. The athletes and coaches in this study spent an average of 3.5 years together. They all were either provincial or national level athletes in their particular sport. This means that they spent at least 16 hours a week with their coach. These combined equal a significant amount of time allowing a significant relationship to develop. It would be interesting in future research to compare time spent with coach and the degree of the relationship that develops as a result.

Do you remain in contact? The fact that twelve out of the thirteen athletes said they still remain in contact with their role model is significant. The relationship that they formed with their role model is obviously important and significant enough to keep the connection and to continue working on the relationship. The coach was not only a role model while coaching the athlete but after the coach/athlete relationship ended. The coaches then remain a role model figure in the lives of these young women. This finding agrees with the social learning theorists (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Bandura & Walters, 1963) proposal that during retention process when a model is no longer around to provide an example and direction to the learner, the learner is able to recall how to behave like the model. This happens as a result of repeated exposure to the behaviour. They also specify that as the individual moves into adolescence their responses will be performed without the model present.

It would be very interesting to find out how many years they have been in contact up until this point. This study could be expanded by turning it into a longitudinal study to follow the thirteen relationships and see how long these two people would remain in contact and what the benefits would be in the future.

Positive Coach Athlete Relationships

This thesis adapted an interview guide from a dissertation completed by Richard Decker Ginsburg (1998). His research attempted to examine the benefits of the relationship between athletes and positive influential coaches as this study has. He identified many themes, which have correlation with the current study. Ginsburg (1998) found that the coach/player relationship as a good fit for the athlete, given his circumstances and psychological needs. In the current study it was concluded that the female coach is an important model for the female athlete in her adolescence stage of life. Next he found that the coach/player relationship was a facilitation of the player's experience of separation-individualization. When social learning theory and adolescence literature is brought together and applied to the current research the same conclusion is found. Finally Ginsburg found that the coach/player relationship acts as a medium for identification with an important adult male role model. In this thesis the adult female coach is afforded the perfect opportunity through time with the athletes and status in the athlete's mind to provide an excellent example of a role model.

Ginsburg (1998) concluded by saying that the coach/player relationship can be seen as a therapeutic construct in which caring and strong role models can have lasting effects on the lives, values, and successes of young men. The

connection between female coach and female athlete can also be seen as a therapeutic construct, guiding female adolescent athletes through a very awkward and confusing time in their lives. Throughout this chapter connection has been made between the effects a coach can have on an athlete and how this can have lasting effects on the individual well into adulthood.

Limitations of the study

This project contributes to the fields of adolescence, social learning theory and socialization through examining the relationships between female athletes and female coaches. The purpose of this study was to explore common themes around the phenomenon of the female coach as a role model to personal growth and development to the adolescent female athlete.

Given that the age of the athletes was between fifteen and eighteen years of age, some of the younger athletes had difficulty articulating what they had experienced with these coaches. Using older athletes and asking them to recall their adolescence may have resulted in the athletes being better able to reflect on their experiences, they may have demonstrated some benefits of maturity that could not yet be observed in these young athletes.

Future Directions

To understand the possible long-term benefits of this relationship the study could be expanded to cover a span of ten years. Conduct the study when the athletes are fifteen and then again when they are twenty-five, this would also receive the benefits of the immediate recall of the relationship as well as the benefits of maturity.

Focusing on the amount of time spent with the coaches could also be an interesting aspect of this study. Not only how many years but also how many hours a week and the age of athletes during the interaction, is there any significant difference noted between relationships?

Practical applications of results

The experiences described by the athletes and coaches in this study have important implications for coaching, as well as teaching and parenting. At the most basic level, coaches need to understand the impact they can have on these developing adults. Whether they want to be or not they are role models. Those individuals who are responsible for hiring and training coaches need to be made aware of these implications and the service they would be providing if they choose individuals who were positive potential role models.

Although this project focused exclusively on the relationship between female coach and female athlete, parents, teachers, other mentors and both males and females can benefit from understanding the positive effects of the coach/athlete relationship. In an ideal world, adults participating in all or some of these roles can work together to achieve their common goals of facilitating healthy personal growth and development in adolescents.

← Female coach as a role model →

Appendix A

General Information to Participants

You are being asked to participate in a study that will explore the relationship between female coach and female athlete, and attempt to find out whether the female coach is a role model for personal growth and development in the adolescent female athlete. During this research you will be involved in an in-depth interview of your relationship with a female coach. This interview should last about 1 hour. This interview may contain questions of a sensitive nature such as how you think your coach might respond to an offer of illicit drug use.

This interview will be conducted at the same place as your practices. The date and time of the interview will be scheduled to best suit your needs. Only you and the interviewer will be present during the interview. These procedures will be audio/videotaped. The audio/video tapes will only be reviewed by the researcher. You do have the option of being audiotaped only

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Your anonymity as a participant in this study will be maintained at all times. The information contained in the "Informed Consent Form" will remain confidential between the participant, your parents/guardian, and the researcher. Your name and the name of your coach will not be used at any time during the interview.

Your involvement in this research will be a one-time commitment and you will not receive any compensation for participation. As a participant you have the right to terminate your participation at any time. If you have any concerns, questions, or complaints regarding your involvement in this research, please contact Tammy Campbell, M.A. candidate, at (905) 309-5009, or via email- tammywhitakercampbell@hotmail.com. Or Philip Sullivan, Assistant Professor, Brock University, (905) 688-5550 ext. 4787, or via email Philip.sullivan@arnie.pec.brocku.ca.

This study has been approved by the Brock University Senate Research Ethics Board (# 02-024 Campbell). Should you have any questions and/or concerns regarding your participation in this research project, feel free to contact the Director of the Office of Research Services at (905) 688-5550 ext. 4315.

Please read and have your parents sign the attached "Informed Consent Form". Thank-you for participating in this research project. If you would like a copy of the results of this study upon its completion, please contact the researcher noted above.

Appendix B

BROCK UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF APPLIED HEALTH SCIENCES

INTENTION TO PARTICIPATE

You are being asked to participate in a study that will explore the relationship between female coach and female athlete, and attempt to find out whether the female coach is a role model for personal growth and development in the adolescent female athlete. During this research you will be involved in an in-depth interview of your relationship with a female coach. This interview should last about 1 hour.

In order to participate in this study the following criteria must be met:

1. You must be between the ages of 13-18.
2. Have signed consent from a parent or guardian.
3. You have been coached by both male and female coaches.
4. You have had a female coach who has made a significant impact on you in terms of personal growth and development.

If you fit these criteria and are interested in participating in this study please write your name, address, and phone number in the space provided. If however you do not fit the criteria, or are not interested in participating in this study just leave the space below blank. Hand back to me only this sheet and keep the others for your reference.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

I am interested in participating in the outlined study yes ____ no ____

BROCK UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF APPLIED HEALTH SCIENCES
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

My signature on this sheet indicates that I will allow my daughter;
to participate in the study **Is the Female Coach a Role Model to Personal
Growth and Development to the Adolescent Female Athlete?** by Tammy
Campbell, M.A. candidate. It indicates that I understand the following,

1. I received information regarding the nature of the study, its purpose, and procedures.
2. Participation is voluntary, and she can withdraw from the study at any time without any fear of penalty. The decision to withdraw will NOT result in any loss of services, or other negative consequences in the sport setting.
3. There are no risks of physical or psychological harm.
4. All individual data that is provided will remain confidential from sources outside of the study including coaches.
5. I will receive a summary of the project, upon request, following completion of the project.
6. I have received a copy of the consent for my records.

Signature of parent or guardian _____
Date _____

I _____ have read the above statements regarding the
study and understand the conditions of my participation in this study.

Signature of athlete _____
Date _____

Signature of researcher _____
Date _____

Tammy Campbell
M.A. Candidate
Brock University
Faculty of Applied Health Sciences
(905) 309-5009 or tammywhitakercampbell@hotmail.com

NOTE: The participant should retain one copy of the consent form for their records.

Appendix C

Athlete Interview

Ginsburg

Please think of the coach who has had the greatest impact on you as a player and as a person. If you must choose between athletic vs. personal development, please select the coach who has facilitated your personal development. I am going to ask a series of questions about important relationships in your past, particularly your relationships with your parents and other family members. I will also ask questions about important events in your life, such as getting a scholarship or suffering the death of a family member, that you believe have had an impact on your present sense of who you are as a person. Secondly, I will ask about your relationship with your coach and explore with you the ways that this relationship has influenced who you are as a person today.

A. Introduction and Family History

1. Tell me about yourself, who you are, what you do, what you are like as a person.
2. Who are the important people in your life and in athletics?
3. Tell me about your present life. What are your days like? How much of a role does sports play in your life? How do you feel about how your life is going?
4. Tell me about your childhood. What was it like growing up?
(Probe for specific milestones or significant experiences, including losses, major illnesses, family moves, parental discipline, and abuse. Get a general impression about childhood and adolescence. What was school like for you?)
5. Tell me about your relationship with your mother. What was it like as a child? What was it like during adolescence? What is it like now?
6. Tell me about a specific memory with your mother as a child that stands out in your mind. It can be an incident that is typical of your relationship, that is really significant to you-something good or bad...whatever comes to mind. (Probe if the subject does not provide a context to this memory, or if the subject fails to explain his feelings and his perceptions of his mother's feelings. Also ask about a significant event in adolescence and in their present relationship.

7. [Same question as #6 but with father].
8. Do you have any siblings? Tell me about them and your relationship with them.
9. Was there anyone else who was especially important to you as a child or teenager? (If necessary: It could be a grandparent or relative or someone who really made a difference in your life).
10. Tell me about your friendships. Who are your closest friends?
11. What was it like for you when you left home for college? (Probe for any difficulties or particularly memorable feelings of loss or happiness).

B. Sports and Relationship with the Coach

1. When did you begin to participate in sports?
2. What did you like about playing sports?
3. Tell me about your relationship with your coach.
How long have you known your coach?
How old were you when you started playing for this coach? Do you remain in contact?
4. In what ways did you develop your skills under the guidance of this coach?
5. How did your coach motivate and challenge you? Can you recall a significant moment in a game or practice that was particularly meaningful to you? In what ways did your coach enable you to succeed? Did you ever feel competitive with your coach?
6. How would you describe an ideal coach? In what ways did your coach meet this ideal? Where there ways this coach failed to meet this ideal?
7. Did you ever discuss issues related to your life outside of sports? If so what did it mean to you?
8. When there was a conflict between you and your coach, what was it like and how was the issue resolved? Were you satisfied with the resolution? If so, why? If not, what would you have preferred?

9. Think of another coach in your life. How does this coach compare to the coach we are discussing?
10. Had your coach been a successful athlete too? Was that important to you?
11. How did your coach help you perform at your best in practice and games? In what ways did this affect you off the field?
12. If you could coach, what characteristics would you strive to incorporate into your style?
13. Sometimes people say that they continue to hear the words of advice and encouragement from the really important people in their lives. How have you experienced this with your coach?
14. When you think about the person you are today, how has your identity been influenced by your coach? (Probe for how the athlete might feel when faced with adversities and life challenges).
15. If you no longer play for your coach, what was it like for you when your final season ended with your coach? How was the separation? How did it make you feel?
16. What else would you like me to know about you as an athlete and a person?
17. Do you have any questions for me?
18. What was the interview like for you?

■ The coach's role is to provide a safe environment for the athlete to learn and to develop the athlete's skills and abilities.

Appendix D

Interview Guide (adapted from Ginsberg 1998)

Please think of a female coach who has had the greatest impact on you as an athlete and as a person. Someone you would consider a role model. If you had to choose between athletic development vs. personal growth and development please select the female coach who has facilitated your personal growth and development. I am going to ask you a series of questions as to how this individual has influenced who you are as a person today.

Interview Guide

1. When did you begin to participate in sports?
2. What did you like about playing sports?
3. Tell me about your relationship with the female coach you have identified. How long have you known this coach? How long did you play under this coach? How old were you when you started playing for this coach?
4. How was your coach a role model? In what ways did you learn from this coach?
5. How would you describe your ideal coach? Does this Coach meet this ideal?
6. Did you ever discuss issues related to your life outside of sports? How was this meaningful?
7. Was there a significant moment/or moments with this coach which you can recall that would describe how this coach influenced you?
8. Think of another coach in your life. How does this coach compare to the coach we are discussing?
9. Would the positive influence from this coach have been the same and as successful if the coach had been a male?
10. If you could coach what characteristics would you include in your coaching style?
11. When you think about the person you are today, how has your identity been influenced by your coach?

12. What makes this coach a good role model? What areas of their life are you familiar with? Do these aspects of this coach influence how you feel about them?
13. If you no longer play for your coach, what was it like for you when you had to part? How was the separation? How did it make you feel? Do you remain in contact?
14. Do you continue to hear words of encouragement from this coach?
15. If your coach were put into an uncomfortable situation that could compromise their moral or values, how do you think they would handle this situation? If put into a similar situation would you use your coaches influence to help you make your decision?
16. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about this coach? About yourself?
17. How was the interview?
18. Do you have any questions for me?

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